

Ideal Home
JANUARY 2015
DECORATE WITH TIFFANY BLUE
PROPERTY PROJECTS
SIMPLE SOLUTIONS
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More Ideas ♥ More Tips ♥ More Style housetohome.co.uk/idealhomemagazine

BRITAIN'S BESTSELLING
HOMES MAGAZINE

What's inside matters most...

Ideal Home

967 Ideas To Make Your Christmas Beautiful

Last-minute INSPIRATION

- ♥ Easy, Elegant Looks
- ♥ Simple Personal Touches
- ♥ Best-buy Tech Gifts

Come inside!

4 REAL HOMES FULL OF FESTIVE IDEAS

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Smart Kitchens & Bathrooms



THE NEW FABRIC EDIT, PLUS

10

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Kitchen featured is Tewkesbury Framed Stone



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Celebrate GOOD TIMES



The holidays are coming, which for us *home-lovers* means kicking back in the place we love best with the people we love most. This year, I'm *taking it slow* rather than stressing about every last detail – it'll all get done somehow. This issue takes a *relaxed approach* to the festivities, too, with recipes for laid-back meals, plus *decorating inspiration* to make your home *warm, welcoming* and *beautiful*. After all, Christmas comes but once a year, so hunker down and let it snow...

Isobel

Isobel McKenzie-Price,
Editorial Director



10
Create a scheme with rustic sparkle



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ON THE COVER Volume 189 Issue 5

Be inspired by beautiful buys and clever decorating ideas this winter

Sprinkle a touch of Christmas magic with our elegant festive room schemes

Spice up your cocktail repertoire with our special drinks ideas



Steal ideas from four inspiring kitchen and bathrooms

Discover four stunning reader homes

Be brave with fabulous floral wallpapers and fabrics

Beat the New Year's day hangover with a cure-all brunch

STYLING SARITA SHARMA PHOTOGRAPH DOMINIC BLACKMORE



36

Decorate with
metallics for a
stylish finish



Last-minute CHRISTMAS

Match your baubles
and wrapping
paper to your
room's palette
for a cohesive
scheme



SHOPPING IDEAS

- 8 Mood Of The Moment
- 12 High Street Heroes
- 16 Cash Clever Decorator

HOME IDEAS

- 22 'White Rooms Can Be Super-Cosy'
- 36 'Boutique-Hotel Style Was Our Inspiration'
- 48 'A Supersize Extension Changed Our Lives'
- 62 'We Brought It Up To Date'

DECORATING IDEAS

- 77 Weave Some Last-Minute Magic
- 84 Pick The Perfect Pattern
- 88 Boutique Hotel Spy
- 90 Colour School: Tiffany Blue
- 92 Be Inspired By Our Moodboards



90 Be bold
with fresh
Tiffany blue



SHOPPING DIRECTORY

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS
FEATURED IN IDEAL HOME, TURN TO

PAGE 176

GIRL ABOUT TECH

- 124 What's New
- 127 You'll Love This: Handy Healthy Drinks Maker
- 129 You'll Love This: Easy-To-Personalise Smartwatch
- 130 Top-Notch High-Res Audio
- 132 Meet Dualit

132

Whizz up tasty
smoothies or
warming soups



PROPERTY IDEAS

- 97 Property Projects
- 100 Extreme Transformations
- 106 'We Love Vintage Style'
- 112 'Symmetry Was At The Heart Of My Design'
- 116 'I Combined Two Rooms'
- 120 'The Roll-Top Bath Is The Star'

SEASONAL IDEAS

- 134 Simple Solutions
- 143 Design Wrapping Paper
- 145 Upcycle Storage Tins
- 146 Fill Star Table Favours
- 148 Blitz That Hangover
- 155 In The Kitchen
- 158 In The Garden

REGULARS

- 7 Isobel's News
- 20 Subscribe From Just £22.49
- 119 & 123 & 126 Travel Offers
- 128 Join Us Online
- 160 Win £40,000 To Refresh Your Home
- 161 Save 20% On Beautiful Shutters
- 178 Simple Pleasures

COOKAHOLICS

— ✂ —

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"WHY BAKE A HOUSE
WHEN YOU CAN BAKE
A WHOLE VILLAGE?"

ABBIE

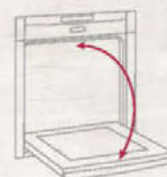


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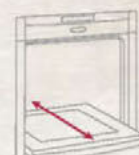
Meet our Cookaholics and see Abbie making her extraordinary gingerbread creation at [youtube.com/bakeityourself](https://www.youtube.com/bakeityourself)



ACCESSIBLE



SPACE SAVING



UNIQUE



Isabel's NEWS



No matter how cold it is, there's always someone to warm your heart

Share a secret love

It's not the big passions that define your life – it's the quiet relationships you hardly notice

We're planning a big family Christmas this year – a houseful of grown-up kids with lots of entertaining, booze and jolly banter – but there's one person who won't be happy until the last visitor leaves. And she is the one who matters most. All Phoebe ever wants is a warm, quiet house; a plentiful supply of tuna; a lap to sit on and someone to protect her precious 'kittens' (two old furry toys that she has been cherishing for years). Just me and her – that's her dream. Or maybe me and my daughter Perri, so she has two laps to choose from.

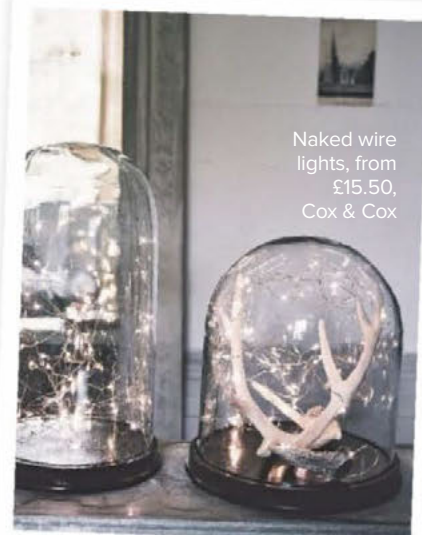
Phoebe and I spend many winter evenings together, and many nights – that's when she collects her 'kittens' and brings them to my bed. She does this as soon as she is convinced that I've settled down for the night, then hides them again in the morning. It's this tiny mark of trust that makes me love her so much, because the

approval of a pet can only be earned by kindness. You can't buy it or force it – it's bestowed on you, if you're lucky, because you have measured up as someone to be trusted, someone kind and giving and safe, a protector and a benefactor.

It's good to remember that, when you have moments of doubt, Phoebe's trust has got us all through many a dark day. She's become more sedate as the years have gone by, but her love remains true and she deserves her pleasures now. So when all the guests have gone, we'll snuggle down by a warm fire and sit peacefully together to share that small, quiet love that can make life feel sunny even on the darkest day.

Isobel

Isobel McKenzie-Price,
Editorial Director



Naked wire lights, from £15.50, Cox & Cox

Add magic to a dark winter day

Twinkly, cosy and warm – three key ingredients to make winter perfect

GO FOR INDUSTRIAL SPARKLE

Minimal, yet magical – pop these battery-operated naked-wire lights (from £15.50) into a chic dome (from £35) to glam up your holiday display – both from Cox & Cox.

CHOOSE THE BEST HOT CHOC

Treat yourself to an indulgent hot chocolate boosted with 1tsp rum and 1tsp vanilla essence. Savour it in a stylish ceramic mug, £16, from Plum & Ashby (below).

LAYER UP WITH A THROW

My best friend Phoebe loves it if I provide plenty of cosy throws for her to curl up on, on those days when I am forced to remove my lap as an option. Sometimes, we just both snuggle up together underneath – double bliss!

Ceramic mug, £16, Plum & Ashby. Jaquard knitted throw, £30, Matalan



FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



READ THIS ON YOUR TABLET

Download your digital edition at housetohome.co.uk/idealhome magazine

IDEAL HOME *Shopping Spy*



Follow my blog
homeshoppingspy.com

See Style Editor Alice's
essential edit of what's
in the shops this month

Fine lines

**This fits snugly
on a bench**
Lassie cushion,
£40, Scandi
Living



Old flame

**Dine by
candlelight**
Antique zinc
covered lantern,
£30, John Lewis



Warm glow

**Consider this
elegant design**
Glass orb ceiling
light, £55, Rockett
St George



Get the message

**We love the hand-drawn
look of the lettering**
'Baby It's Cold Outside'
sign, £3, Matalan



Green room

**Add warmth with
imitation foliage**
Medium faux olive
tree, £75,
Nordic House



MOOD OF THE MOMENT...

Simple celebration

For a laid-back dinner to see in the New Year, pare
back the fuss but add some dramatic flourishes

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



Simple storage
Keep tableware out on display
Leaning shelves, £310,
French Connection

Star baker

**Use to make
biscuits, then
as a decoration**
Cookie cutter
decorations,
£8 for four, Marks
& Spencer



Lovely lustre

Ideal for a mantel
Large antique
silver candlestick,
£9.95, Nkuku



Christmas kiss

**Who needs an
excuse at midnight?**
Mistletoe bundle,
Croft Collection range,
£6, John Lewis



New neutral

**Soft grey warms
up bright white**
Talía dining chair,
£95, Habitat



Name game

**Personalise your
table settings**
Heart-shaped
slate tags, £7 for
four, Kaleidoscope



Finishing touch

Hang this over a mirror
Zinc heart string, £6,
House Envy





Last-minute CHRISTMAS

Fix a tree branch over the table and hang silver and white decorations from it



For a simple but smart scheme, punctuate a neutral backdrop with shimmering metallics, bright red and slate grey, then finish with fresh foliage. Slate rectangular place mats, £35 for two; Scandi lantern, £30; Scandi tealight tray, £30; decorative eucalyptus tie, £6 for three; all The White Company

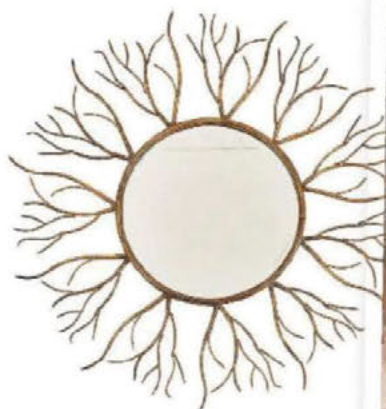
LOOK WHAT WE FOUND!

£3
for 10

A lovely way to clip cards and photos onto a display
Wooden lace-print clips, House Envy

See more finds on Alice's blog homeshoppingspy.com





Who's the fairest?
This enchanted design will create a magical focal point
Gold twig mirror, £275, Graham and Green

Everybody's DOING...



Nature table
Mix weathered wood with copper
Daddy moose head, £20; driftwood stag ornament, £8; driftwood tree, £20; copper star, £10; wooden house candle holder, £10; all Paperchase

Rustic sparkle

Find natural materials that have been given a glimmering finish or metallic touch

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



Super star
Hang this in a window
Rustic light-up star, £29.50, Marks & Spencer



To the letter
Pop on a mantel or shelf
Noel letter blocks, £6, Matalan



Metallic knit
Add shimmer
Natural metallic knitted cushion, £35, RJR..John Rocha range, Debenhams

From the forest
A natural choice
Candle centrepiece, £14.99, HomeSense



Spun gold
A traditional style with added bling
Gold bench, £110, Zara Home

Gilded cones
Arrange these in a vase
Gold pine cones, £1.99 for three, Butlers



Foil wrap
Give your sofa a little festive glitter
Gold foil-print cable-knitted throw, £30, BHS

Stylish store
A handy home for bits and bobs
Metallic fabric storage basket, £7.99, H&M

SO HOT *Right Now*

Owls: This trend still has wings



£20

Flight of fancy
Part of a range of bird designs
Barn owl cushion, Birdy II range, Magpie



£6

Woodland character
This ceramic piece has rustic charm
Dreamscape owl mug, Paperchase



£6.99

Nostalgic kitchenalia
We love the vintage illustration
Hanna owl tin, The Oak Room

LOOK WHAT WE FOUND!



£41.99

A contemporary take on the wall-mounted deer head
Wooden stag clock, Studio Thirty Two range, WorldStores

See more finds at worldstores.co.uk/s/Woodland.htm

blue suntree.

Exceptional Design for Everyone



HIGH STREET *Heroes*

Julie Reynolds-Smith

Get to know the brains (and style) behind the recently rebooted home collections at Tesco

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

When Tesco embarked on a campaign to refresh its homeware offering two years ago, the company needed to find someone who lived and breathed home products to head up the launch. It didn't have to look that far – with more than two decades of experience as a homeware buyer for Marks & Spencer, Next and BHS, Julie Reynolds-Smith knows the high street inside out.

In less than a year, Julie and her team revamped Tesco's homeware collection, expanding it to include more furniture and introducing trend-led soft furnishings and accessories to reflect its growing style-savvy fanbase. The spring 2015 range, which hits the shelves in January, is made up of six exciting trends, including the retro-inspired Mid-Century and the elegant Modern Romance.

GET TO KNOW HER SIGNATURE STYLE

'I would say that my personal style is contemporary with a classic twist,' says Julie. 'It's important for me to surround myself with things that make me feel comfortable and relaxed.' Her favourite collection from Tesco's spring 2015 range is the mid-century trend. 'It features bright, bold colours and furniture designed by our in-house team,' she says. 'I always love the change in seasons, particularly winter to spring. It's about looking forward to the sun coming out, being able to open your windows again and enjoy the weather, especially the garden. The new trends we've created for spring really reflect that.'

THE WOMAN BEHIND THE LOOK

Julie's passion for design started at a young age. 'As a child, I was always dressing up or making my own clothes and putting on mini fashion shows for my family,' she says. 'In my last year at school, I was taught by a fantastic teacher called Mrs Smith in a

design and technology class. She inspired me to follow my dream and do something that I love as a career. Part of her class was learning how to make clothes – I knew I was good at it and it was something that she encouraged me with. I also wanted to learn about the management and financial side of things and she helped me focus on that, too.'

Julie went on to study Clothing Management at the London College of Fashion. 'The course covered everything, from learning how to cut patterns to following an item through from making it to marketing it,' says Julie. 'While I was still in college, I was really fortunate to

be accepted onto Marks & Spencer's graduate scheme, where I worked in the clothing department. When I graduated two years later, I was offered a job there as a buyer, but it wasn't until 1995 when I switched departments to work in homeware for the first time.'

Since then, Julie has worked as a buyer for a number of well-known high-street companies, including Next and BHS. She was the commercial director for homeware supplier Bliss Home and even opened her own wedding-dress shop before the opportunity to work with Tesco cropped up. 'The offer of relaunching the entire homeware collection for Tesco was too exciting to turn down,' she says. 'We've developed the collection to offer a complete range of stylish and affordable products to all of our customers. We've placed an enormous amount of focus on quality and we have to make sure that we're always improving it, while maintaining value.'

THE JULIE REYNOLDS-SMITH

PHILOSOPHY 'Your home is an extension of you. Like the clothes you wear, it's what you stand for and what you believe in, so make it really personal and fill it with the things that you love.'



STYLE GURU
Julie just can't get enough of homeware on the high street



TIMELESS CLASSICS
Simple pieces ooze style
Whitstable large sofa in Taupe, £599; Portobello trestle coffee table, £89; both Tesco

60-SECOND BIOGRAPHY

- Julie was born in Watford, Hertfordshire, in 1971.
- In 1993, she graduated from the London College of Fashion with a BA in Clothing Management.
- Julie's first job was as a clothing buyer for Marks & Spencer. She later moved within the company to work in the bed and bath department.
- In 1996, she joined Next's homeware team.
- She then worked as commercial director at Bliss Home before opening her own bridal shop in 2003 in St Albans, Hertfordshire.
- She returned to interiors to work for BHS for two years, before joining Tesco as head of home in 2013.
- She now lives in Hertfordshire with her husband, Richard, and their daughters, Lauren, 15, and Issie, 11.



A FINE ROMANCE
Smart furniture is softened
with florals in pink tones
Mayfair medium sofa in
Velvet Slate, £399; Butlers
tray table, £35; Modern
Romance rug, £90; all Tesco

OUR FAVOURITE BUYS

*Hot off the press, check out these pieces
from Tesco's spring/summer collection*

BRIGHT SIDE

Freshen up your scheme
with a few pops of colour
Geometric grey print
cushion, £8, Tesco



TEATIME TREAT

Mix and match your tea set
with these design-savvy pieces
Retro sugar bowl, £4; Retro milk
jug, £4; Retro teapot, £10; all Tesco



SWEET SENTIMENT

Make this your
mantra for 2015
Amazing framed
print wall art,
£8, Tesco

COLOUR BLOCKING

The alternating
coloured
backdrops on
this bookshelf
add plenty of
personality
Oslo bookcase,
£169, Tesco



NEAT SEAT

This cool chair
has a retro vibe
Palermo stacking
chair, £49, Tesco

TO DRY FOR

Add some jolly
geometrics to
your bathroom
Bright triangle bath
towel, £8, Tesco



BACK TO THE FUTURE
Julie's team has created
furniture inspired by
designs from the Fifties
Wooden desk, £299;
chair, £169 for two; both
Stockholm range, Tesco

Steal her style SOFT PASTELS

*Give your home a refresh with Julie's
mid-century-inspired colour palette*

USE THEM to add
subtle colour to a striking
monochrome scheme.

MIX THEM with
white-painted furniture
to update a pared-back,
Scandi-style look.

TRY THEM together
on adjacent walls or in
separate blocks of colour
on one wall to create
a contemporary feature.

Camilla,
£27.72 for 2.5ltr,
Albany range,
Designerpaint

Disraeli Green
Hardworking
Emulsion,
£39 for 2.5ltr,
National Trust
collection,
Fired Earth

Mole's Breath
Estate
Emulsion,
£36 for 2.5ltr,
Farrow & Ball



3 of the best POUFFES



£99

Touch of tribal

The perfect addition to a neutral scheme
Tribal-print pouffe, Marks & Spencer



£179

Sweet seat

A pretty design by Nina Campbell
Mia pouffe, Leila range, Made.com



£95

Cosy knit

Use as a footstool or as a seat
Pink knitted round pouffe, Habitat

LOOK WHAT WE FOUND!



£3
each

Perfect for a New Year's Eve party
Visionär paper decorations, Ikea

See more finds on Alice's blog
homeshoppingspy.com

THE NEXT BIG THING

White on white

Layer up tones and textures of white for a soft, uplifting space that's not just a blank canvas

FOR WHERE
TO BUY ITEMS
SHOWN, TURN TO
OUR SHOPPING
DIRECTORY

The subtle
pattern repeat
on the wallcovering
resembles folded
paper to create
a textured layer
of interest
1701 wallpaper,
£35 per roll, Eco
White Light collection,
Eco Wallpaper

THE STORY SO FAR An all-white interior may bring flashbacks of soulless, Nineties, studio-style rooms, but the modern rebirth focuses on layering textures, different materials and a spectrum of shades of white to create plenty of visual interest. It's about mixing rough with smooth, and hard with soft; whether it's marble and ceramic, relief or embossed; origami folds, quilted or knitted textures. **WHERE WE'VE SEEN IT** John Rocha's signature use of organic, tactile designs can be seen in his latest range for Debenhams, with cushions and throws in lace, felt, fur and knits, and relief and embossed florals for ceramics. Eco Wallpaper's Eco White Light designs come in tones of white for barely there patterns and soft metallics. Russell Pinch uses sculptural design to lift the lacquered surface of the Wave sideboard.

LATEST RELEASES Jonathan Adler has given white furniture a tactile feel with velvet and sheepskin for seating and mock-croc leather for the Preston range. The ceramic collections, Relief and Charade, feature embossed and raised effects on smooth ceramic, while Marcel Wanders' Illusions wallpaper for Graham & Brown includes trompe l'oeil effects of carved stone and subtle patterns.

Natural curves

Inspired by an
organic shape
Anemone
bowl, £68,
Jonathan Adler



Bit on the side

Sculptural and practical
Wave sideboard, £1,795, Russell
Pinch range, The Conran Shop



Two tone

A subtle design
for a gentle scent
Scent One white diffuser
set, £38, Kelly Hoppen

Soft touch

The quilted finish
makes this very tactile
Love chair, £959,
Marcel Wanders
range, Moooi





AT HOME...

We love the combination of our juniper paint, damson scatter cushions and Aldwych coffee table
Create your own design ideas at neptune.com

N
NEPTUNE

CASH CLEVER *Decorator*

Get a traditional look for less than £135

Create a classic Christmas scheme with wooden decorations, evergreen displays and sprigs of berries

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



Perfect pine
Line up a few of these on the table
Mini potted tree,
John Lewis

£6

Vintage feel
Start a singsong
Twelve Days Of
Christmas cracker,
John Lewis

£20
for 12

Final countdown
Fill with little gifts
Wooden fretwork light-up
Advent calendar, Gisela
Graham range, The
Contemporary Home

£50



Quality street
Add a warm glow
to a dark corner
Miniature light-up
houses, BHS



£45



£8

Bold berries
Cut a berry garland
into small sprigs to
decorate chairs
Red berry garland,
Hobbycraft

Pop of red
Use to serve
drinks or as a
tealight holder
Floral tumbler,
Zara Home



£5.99

BE
CANDLE
SAFE



Get a relaxed,
natural look by
decorating the
dining table
with berries and
fresh foliage

IDEAL GREAT DEAL

Get the look whatever your budget



£35

A to Z
A hand-pulled
screen print
Illustrated letter L
unframed print
(30cm x 40cm),
Bold & Noble

To the letter
Choose from
two patterns
Alphabet unframed
A4 print, Papio
Press range, Noton
thehighstreet.com

£9.99



YOUR RECEIPT

Mini tree and crackers, John Lewis.....	£26
Wooden Advent calendar, The Contemporary Home.....	£50
Miniature light-up houses, BHS.....	£45
Red berry garland, Hobbycraft.....	£8
Tumbler, Zara Home.....	£5.99

TOTAL £134.99

FEATURE CAROL WORTLEY-BISHOP
PHOTOGRAPHS SIMON WHITMORE



FIND ALL THE DETAILS

DECORATION AND FURNITURE Walls painted in Chateau Grey matt emulsion, £38 for 2.5ltr, Sanderson. Oak natural planks flooring, £22.49 per sq m, Rustic range, Quick-Step. Mississippi rug with herringbone border in Cherry (2sq m), £399, Crucial Trading. Empire table, £959, Scumble Goosie. Natural oak chairs, £230 each, Suffolk range; glazed 4ft dresser, £2,150, Henley range; all Neptune. Padang sideboard, £1,495, Lombok. Nordman 7ft Christmas tree, £51.99, Kingswood Christmas Trees. **ON WALL** Unframed alphabet prints, £35 each, Bold & Noble. Picture frames (34cm x 44cm), £7 each, B&Q. **ON TABLE** Linen hemstitched tablecloth, from £72; hemmed linen napkins, £14 each; all The Linen Press. Linen dinner plate, £216 for a 16-piece set; Relish cutlery, £70 for a 16-piece set; Merlot wine glasses, £26 for four; Champagne flutes, £24 for six; all Denby. Red Calico side plates, £9.50 each, Burleigh. Dessertspoons, £12 each, Swanky Maison. Red glasses (used as tealight holders) £16.50 each, Pentreath & Hall. 12 Days of Christmas crackers, £20 for 12; mini potted trees, £6 each; all John Lewis. Heather pots wrapped in hessian, £4 per m, The Wedding of My Dreams range, Notonthehighstreet.com; Cranberry Stripe ribbon, £5 for 10m, Jane Means. **ON CHAIRS** Cushion covers made in Grain Stripe Peony, £39.50 per m, Ian Mankin. Berry sprigs (cut from berry garland), £8, Hobbycraft. Fabric birds, £5 each,

The Contemporary Home. **ON/IN DRESSER** Miniature light-up houses, £45, BHS. Chardonnay wine glasses, £39 for six; Linen cereal bowls, £9 each; for similar wine glasses, try the Bormiloli, £18 for four; all Denby. Christmas cards, from a selection, Paperchase and Tesco Direct. Delamere Rural teacups and saucers, £16 each; side plates, £7.50 each; all Spode range, John Lewis. Red Calico jugs, from £16.50 each; sugar bowls, from £10 each; mugs, £15 each; all Burleigh. Vintage-style tableware, £35 for a 12-piece set, Sainsbury's. Perigord water glasses, £45 for six, Pentreath & Hall. Vintage dessertspoons, £26 for six, RE. Robin decoration, £6, Next. Countdown to Christmas chalkboard, £11.50, 1st Unique Gifts range; tiny elf stocking (on gift), £3.50, Karen Hilton Designs range; both Swanky Maison. **ON SIDEBOARD** Wooden Advent calendar, £50; plaid ribbon, £7 for 9m; both Gisela Graham range, The Contemporary Home. Large round vase, £17.50; small red baubles, £15.50 for 24; all Cox & Cox. Brown Kraft paper, £3 for 5m, Paperchase. Red grosgrain ribbon, 80p per m, Jane Means. Christmas cards, from a selection, BHS and Paperchase. Tealight holders, £44.95 for six, Retreat. **ON/BELOW TREE** Candle tree lights, £40 for 30, Cox & Cox. Check robin, £6, Next. Decorations, from a selection, Aspen & Brown, Dobbies Garden Centres, John Lewis, Sainsbury's, Tesco Direct and The Contemporary Home. Kraft paper, plaid ribbon, red grosgrain ribbon, all as before

IDEAL HOME MOODBOARD Classic Christmas



LOVE THE LOOK

Stick to natural textures, such as wooden flooring and linen napkins, and wrap gifts in brown kraft paper and red ribbon for a traditional look

For more moodboards turn to page 92

FOR GREAT CHRISTMAS
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JANUARY 2015 | 17



GET THE LOOK
IN 3 BUYS

French country

There's nothing shabby
about this chic look

£12.99

**Delicate
touch**

We love the
crochet trim
Linen cushion
cover, H&M



£9.50

Elegant etchings

Raise a gorgeous glass

Small clear wine glass,
GreenGate range, Occe-Home

from
£599



Faded florals

The painterly print
looks beautifully worn

Grove armchair, Marks & Spencer

LOOK WHAT
WE FOUND!



£32
for three

These prints look soft to the touch
Natural printed hatboxes,
RJR.John Rocha range, Debenhams

See more finds on Alice's blog
homeshoppingspy.com

This month we love...



Michela Colling, Style and Decorating Assistant

'The Grey Scale collection from BHS.
Gorgeous greys with metallics and cosy
textures have a luxe-industrial finish'

Map-printed
bedding, from
£25 for a single set;
XL Silver Station
statement clock,
£100; Luxe Heather
foiled cushion, £16;
metallic cowhide
rug, £249; all BHS



FOR WHERE
TO BUY ITEMS
SHOWN, TURN TO
OUR SHOPPING
DIRECTORY

IDEAL GREAT DEAL

Get the look whatever your budget



£365

STYLE STATEMENT
Created in 1925, this
classic is still so chic
Louis Poulsen PH 4/3
pendant light, Nest



£49

GO RETRO
Perfect for adding vintage
style to a kitchen-diner
Seval metal ceiling
light, Tesco Direct

FEATURE ALICE HUMPHRIES, MICHELA COLLING

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1 Living room

A fresh white palette sets a soothing tone, while wood flooring and soft textures create a space that's warm and welcoming

Walls painted in Pointing Modern Emulsion, £39.50 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Large Venetian mirror, £199, Out There Interiors range, Notonthehighstreet.com





‘White rooms can be super-cosy’

Sally Underwood and Nick Scott’s home is a masterclass in making white rooms feel homely

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



The big **CHANGE**

KNOCKING THROUGH
THE KITCHEN AND
UTILITY ROOM, FITTING
A NEW KITCHEN AND
BATHROOM, AND
REDECORATING
THROUGHOUT

Take the **60-SECOND TOUR**

BOUGHT FOR	SPENT	NOW WORTH
£292,000	£32,500	£435,000

THE PROPERTY

A mid-terrace, three-bedroom, late-Victorian worker's cottage in Elstree, Hertfordshire, bought in June 2012.

WHAT IT COST

Building work.....	£12,500
Kitchen.....	£5,000
Bathroom.....	£5,000
Carpentry.....	£2,000
Decorating and furniture.....	£8,000
TOTAL.....	£32,500

WHO LIVES HERE

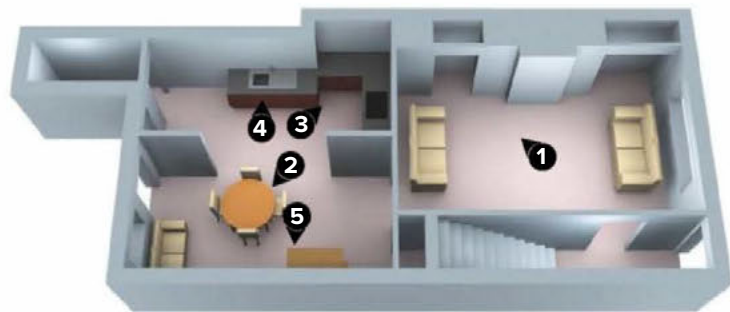
Sally Underwood and her fiancé, Nick Scott. Sally works in Parliament and Nick is a lawyer.

THE LOOK

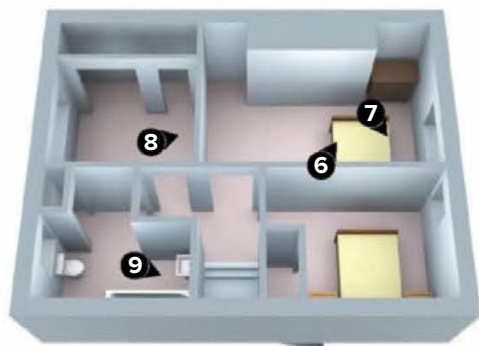
Elegant country, with white walls, white-painted furniture, elegant mirrors and pastel accents keeping spaces light and bright.

**LESSONS LEARNED**

“We stripped and repainted a lot of second-hand furniture. It’s a great way to get the look you want without overspending.”

**▲ GROUND FLOOR**

The living room is at the front of the house. The dining room leads through to the kitchen and utility room at the back

**◀ FIRST FLOOR**

There are two bedrooms to the right of the stairs, and a bathroom and a dressing room on the left



Get the
LOOK
PAGE 33

2 Dining room

The dresser and dining table were eBay finds, which Sally painted white to match the pared-back scheme. Flynn scoop-back chairs in Biscuit Beige, £129 each, Made.com. For a similar mirror, try the bead in Champagne, £150, John Lewis

‘We’d been living in small spaces for so long that I couldn’t wait to begin furnishing a spacious home’



BE
CANDLE
SAFE



‘The kitchen doors had to be custom-fit into a frame made by our carpenter’

Sally Underwood has always had a passion for interiors and has enjoyed making her mark on all the homes she has lived in with her fiancé Nick Scott. ‘When Nick and I rented a tiny student flat near Regent’s Park in London, I designed window seats and wallpapered everywhere,’ she says. ‘I remember saving up to go on shopping sprees at Heal’s and the incredible interiors department at Liberty. I’d buy a metre of Designers Guild fabric at a time to make covers for scatter cushions.’

After eight years of renting a small flat in Fitzrovia, Sally and Nick decided it was the right time to invest in a property of their own. ‘Having lived in very cramped quarters in London, where we both have relatively intense jobs, we made the decision to move away and enjoy life in the countryside with our rescue dogs, Tinker and Rascal, near to where I grew up in Hertfordshire,’ says Sally. The couple rented a

two-bedroom house in Radlett, near St Albans, to use as a base for their property search. Just two months down the line, they found their dream home – a three-bedroom Victorian worker’s cottage in the village of Elstree. As there was no chain, the couple were able to move in five weeks later.

‘We’d been living in small spaces for so long that I couldn’t wait to begin furnishing and enjoying having a spacious home,’ says Sally. ‘The cottage had been rented out for 10 years and was empty for eight months, so it was very unloved, but we instantly fell for its charm and the view of horses in the adjoining fields. The property came with all sorts of land access and backs on to a livery yard, with plenty of open space and fields, which is great for walking the dogs.’

It wasn’t all positive, though. ‘The kitchen was like a dumping ground,’ says Sally. ‘It had three disused washing machines, a chest freezer and old carpet that was riddled with damp.’ The clinical bathroom ➔

3 Kitchen

Tongue-and-groove unit doors, open shelving and limestone flooring give the kitchen country style

Metod Maximera units, from £79 for a W600mm base unit, Ikea; painted in Wimborne White Estate Eggshell, £51 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Molise Morning landscape oil painting by Brian De La Cour; find similar pieces at Artists & Illustrators



Last-minute CHRISTMAS

An array of candles and some stunning glass decanters set the scene for cosy winter evenings



5 Dining room

Sally gave the second-hand dresser a distressed look. She uses it to display cards, trinkets and tableware

Farmhouse solid oak flooring, £77.99 per sq m, Wickes. For a similar second-hand farmhouse dresser, try eBay



4 Kitchen sink

A simple splashback of white glazed tiles frames the large Belfast sink

Architecture white gloss tiles, £39.65 per sq m, Fired Earth. For a similar tap, try the Edsvik, £50, Ikea. For a similar basket, try the Bahima, from £29.95, Nkuku. For a similar vase, try the mixed bouquet, £38, LSA International range, Occa-Home



Go country Choose a Belfast sink

A Belfast is the style of sink that was traditionally found in a butler's pantry. The deep, rectangular ceramic design is still popular today in country-style kitchens.

■ **Franke** Find simple, minimalist ceramic Belfast sinks in both single and double-bowl versions at franke.com.

■ **Rangemaster** The double-bowl Belfast with a glossy fire-clay ceramic finish is ideal for washing large pots and pans. Visit rangemaster.co.uk.

■ **Shaws of Darwen**

Clean, contemporary styling and traditional hand-crafted methods are brought together to form the Classic collection. See the range at shawsofdarwen.com.



Last-minute
CHRISTMAS

Fill matching
flowerpots with
pine cones,
candy canes
and foliage





7 Main bedroom

Soft furnishings in a mix of lilac shades lend muted colour to the bedroom

Walls painted in Bone White Elements Emulsion, £50 for 2.5ltr, Fired Earth. Hemnes bedside table, £40, Ikea. For a similar table lamp, try the slim oval glass, £125, Primrose & Plum

6 Main bedroom

White-painted furniture and white walls continue the calming mood into the bedroom. Sally painted the cast-iron fireplace to help it blend in with the scheme

Rosemore throw in Soft Grey, £120, The White Company. For a similar dressing table mirror, try the cream-footed oval, £30, Laura Ashley

wasn't much better. 'Nick said it reminded him of the cold shower cubicles at boarding school,' says Sally.

The couple's first challenge was to open up the cottage's ground floor by removing the wall between the kitchen and utility room. The property had previously been extended with an outbuilding attached to the kitchen. Sally and Nick replaced the roof of this extension and turned the room into a pantry, before turning their attention to the kitchen.

They found the website ratedpeople.com useful for getting quotes from local tradesmen to complete the building work and carpentry. 'We used the same team to fit the kitchen, as we were really pleased with the finish of their work and they were very reasonable,' says Sally. 'As the building work was done in July, we spent a lot of evenings in the garden eating Chinese takeaways, while the back of the house was a concrete shell. I designed the kitchen, which wasn't an easy task, as we were working with difficult

3 of the best MERCURY-GLASS ACCESSORIES



£45

Shine on

Illuminate your bedside with this glass lamp with silk-effect shade

Camellia table lamp, Very

Soft sparkle A pretty faux bloom in a glass tumbler

Faux rose in mercury glass, Marks & Spencer



£15



Light touch

Put this candle and glass cloche in the middle of a table

Medium mercury winter cloche candle, Sainsbury's

£15

'The light is fantastic, we get incredible sunsets and we are surrounded by nature'

dimensions and I'm not great at maths, but we had a very clear idea of what we wanted it to look like.'

All the decorating and furnishing was done on a strict budget, and the kitchen units and worktops came from Ikea. 'I wanted a tongue-and-groove design for the unit doors and Ikea was the only place I could find them,' says Sally. 'The doors had to be custom-fit into a frame made by our carpenter, so that we got the design we wanted in a way that worked in the space.'

The couple moved the washer-dryer to a utility cupboard created in the alcove beneath the stairs. Sally found the wall and floor tiles for the kitchen, which were also used in the bathroom, in Fired Earth. 'Magda Freedman at the showroom was wonderful and we spent many hours with her selecting the right limestone tiles for the floors,' says Sally.

A love of antiques has led Sally to upcycle pieces of Victorian furniture bought in junk shops and on eBay. 'We spent a total of £850 on all the furniture in the ➔



‘Our main priority was to create a sense of space and light while still making it feel homely’



8 *Dressing room*

A white-painted console stands out against the duck-egg blue wallpaper. Built-in wardrobes provide ample storage

End wallpaper in Sky Blue, £57 per roll, Intaglio collection, Zoffany. For a similar console, try the Baron, £539, Maison

9 *Bathroom*

The bathroom tiles are the same as the splashback in the kitchen


California wall mirror in grey, £79, Brissi. All The Breeds make-up bag, £15, Plum & Ashby

dining room,’ she says. ‘When we went to the south coast to collect the dining table from the sellers, we got on so well they invited us to stay for dinner!’

Sally and Nick have created a feeling of calm throughout the house by painting walls white and adding soft accents in dusky pink and chalky blue. ‘Our main priority was to create a sense of space and light while still making it feel homely,’ says Sally.

The couple got stuck in with decorating, painting walls in their spare time. ‘I’d say it’s best to try to do everything in one go rather than concentrating on a room at a time,’ says Sally. ‘The tiles in the living room fireplace were in poor condition, so I plastered over them and tiled the hearth.’ Sally also painted the Victorian cast-iron fireplace in the main bedroom white to tie it in with the soothing, pale scheme.

White-painted furniture and storage give the overall look timeless country style and mirrors have been used all around the cottage to make the rooms appear bigger and brighter. Sally has added colour and interest with artwork of landscapes. ‘I love moody paintings of nature with atmospheric skies,’ she says.

The couple couldn’t be happier with the outcome of their decision to move to the countryside. ‘As much as we love London, when you live in the centre of it, you never really switch off,’ says Sally. ‘Here, it’s so easy to relax. The light is fantastic, we get the most incredible sunsets and we are surrounded by nature.’ 



Gold tealights

Metallic candle holders give your mantel a warm glow
For similar tealight holders, try the silver embossed, £12.95 for three, Nordic House



Glass baubles

Let your tree sparkle with gold and silver decs
For similar baubles, try the beaded glass egg, £5 each, Marks & Spencer



Frosty table

Stick to an all-white palette to create a magical wintry table
For a similar cake stand, try the 33cm, £11.99, Mary Berry range, Lakeland



FOCUS ON Classic decorations

Antique-effect tealights and candlesticks, clear-glass baubles and plain white linens, china and table decorations give Sally and Nick's house timeless appeal at Christmas. Create the same magical look with sparkling tree decorations, silver candlesticks and ornaments, and shimmering crystal glassware.

Adorn the mantel

Clusters of metallic and glass objects make an elegant, classic display on a mantel. Group together mismatched antique-look candlesticks, ribbed-glass tealights, vintage-style bud vases filled with white roses and a couple of shabby-chic picture frames to create a relaxed arrangement. As a finishing touch, carefully wind a string of warm white fairy lights in and out of all the objects to give them a subtle festive glow.

Dress the tree It can be tempting to hang all the decorations you've gathered over the years on the tree, but it might not have the most sophisticated result. Instead, experiment with a limited colour palette. A mix of gold or silver and clear-glass baubles with white-painted wooden decorations creates a classic wintry look. Tiny LED lights scattered among the branches will add a starry effect, and if you yearn for a touch of kitsch, finish the tree with a dusting of fake snow.

Glam up the table

Give your dining table winter-wonderland style. Start with a white tablecloth, then add rolled white napkins, glass serving dishes, white china, a stylish candelabra and lots of ceramic candle holders. Your glassware will twinkle all the more when the table is sprinkled with metallic confetti.



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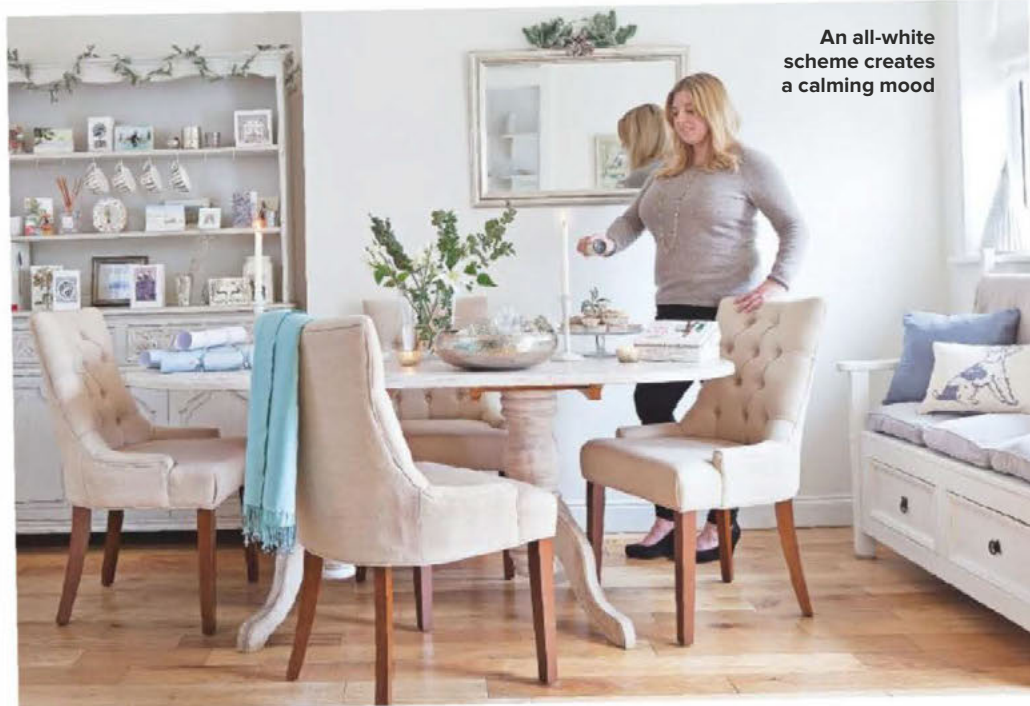


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An all-white scheme creates a calming mood

Ideal ▶

GREY CHIC

Buy one for each end of the table

Tall grey candlestick (H27cm), Gisela Graham range, The Contemporary Home



£12

◀ **Great deal**

WHITE LIGHT

This shorter alternative comes in a range of sizes

Ersätta block candle holder (H21cm), Ikea



£7

Get Sally's look

Use soft shades of grey, blue and shimmering silver to bring subtle colour to a white scheme

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

Ideal ▶

COUNTRY DRESSER

Painted in a soft grey
Padstow two-door sideboard and top in Putty, Marks & Spencer



£898

£724

◀ **Great deal**
FRENCH INSPIRED
Rustic country style
Caldecote French Grey dresser, The Cotswold Company

Ideal ▶

HANDSOME SEAT

The sprung seat will keep you comfy

Henley dining chair in Mocha, Neptune range, John Lewis



£295

£129

◀ **Great deal**

BUTTONED UP

Just as smart in a linen mix

Flynn scoop back chair in Biscuit Beige, Made.com



Ideal ▶

GRAND STAND
Add a little sparkle to your tea party
Silvered glass cake stand, Alison At Home



From £29.50



£16.95

◀ **Great deal**

GLASS ACT

Display sweet treats on a vintage-look stand
Glass scalloped cake stand, Dotcomgiftshop



£79

◀ **Ideal**
EASTERN ELEGANCE
Silver accessories will
elevate your scheme
Large Hammered
bowl, Multiyork



£29.90

▲ **Great deal**
HAMMERED METAL
Use to display a selection
of tealights on your table
Aluminium dish, Oriental
Lounge range, Butlers



£150

Ideal
DISTRESSED FRAME
The antique-effect finish will
lend character to your room
Pewter beaded mirror, Next

**Last-minute
CHRISTMAS**

Dress a statement
mirror with a pre-lit
garland and a sprig
of mistletoe for a
rustic festive
glow



£41.99

Great deal
LOOKING GLASS
This bevelled-edge design
has an Art Deco feel
Silver beaded
mirror, The Range



£1,460

▼ **Ideal**
BEST IN SHOW
Bertie the terrier on
the front, ticking
stripes on the back
Bertie Ticking cushion,
Plum & Ashby



£38

▲ **Ideal**
DINE IN STYLE
A sturdy design with
a beautiful elm top
Grey-wash elm
table (diameter 151cm),
Sweetpea & Willow



£575

◀ **Great deal**
WHITE OUT
This bleached-wood
pedestal table
extends from a
circle to an oval
Presto table
(diameter 140cm), Loaf

◀ **Great deal**
TOP DOG
Take style notes
from this well-
dressed pooch
Ned The Dog
cushion, Dickens
& Jones range,
House of Fraser



£30



ASK SALLY

■ **WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR HOME?** 'The views of horses grazing in the fields. We watched a foal take its first steps the other day, which was wonderful.'

■ **WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE HOMES BUY?** 'I love collecting silverware – my favourite pieces are a Georgian cruet set and a 19th-century christening cup that I picked up at the Mill Hill Antiques Fair.'

■ **WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE INTERIORS SHOP?** 'We love to shop at Heal's, The White Company, Brissi and Neptune. The homeware department at Liberty is fabulous, too.'

■ **WHAT'S YOUR DECORATING SECRET?** 'If you decorate all your rooms white, but also want the enjoyment of having dogs and a thriving family life, a compromise has to be made somewhere. Ours was to invest in a wet-and-dry vacuum cleaner and a steam mop!'

FEATURE LISA FAZZANI MAIN PHOTOGRAPH FIONA WALKER-ARNOTT



SALE STARTS 9AM BOXING DAY

Carringham range from Harveys.

harveysfurniture.co.uk

Harveys
the furniture store



‘Boutique-hotel style was our inspiration’

Want to give your home a luxe makeover? Copy the Richmonds and mix designer and high-street buys

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



1 Kitchen

The kitchen, which is in a new extension, is a bright space thanks to bifold glass doors, white units, designer pendants and a mirrored splashback. Rational Tio handleless kitchen in Arctic White Gloss, £22,000, James James. For similar pendant lampshades, try the chandelier, £165 each, Brunklaus Amsterdam.

The big **CHANGE**

EXTENDING AND
RENOVATING A VICTORIAN
HOUSE, AND CREATING A
MODERN INTERIOR WITH
NEW BATHROOMS
AND AN OPEN-PLAN
KITCHEN



2 Formal living room

'Open-plan living is great, but I love having our separate, formal living room – it's a grown-up retreat for displaying nice pieces,' says Gemma. 'We do use it for the whole family, but the kids don't play in there without us'

For similar occasional chairs, try the Lancelot, £1,295 each, Andrew Martin range, Occa-Home. For similar wallpaper, try the Flourish, £17 per roll, Graham & Brown





Take the 60-SECOND TOUR

BOUGHT FOR	SPENT	NOW WORTH
£712,000	£144,000	£900,000



THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom, Victorian, detached house in Puddington, Cheshire, bought in December 2010.

WHAT IT COST

Extension and kitchen.....	£110,000
Bathrooms.....	£20,000
Furniture and carpets.....	£14,000
TOTAL.....	£144,000

WHO LIVES HERE

Gemma and Julian Richmond, with children, Amelia, 11, Max, eight, and Tom, six. Gemma is an interior-design consultant and Julian is a managing director of a marketing agency.

THE LOOK

Contemporary yet classic, with a cool palette of grey and white, some splashes of colour with accessories, and designer furniture teamed with high-street pieces.

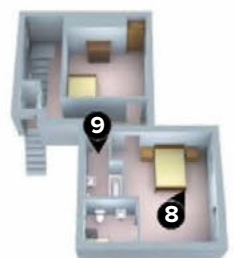
LESSONS LEARNED

“If you have a house full of children, including good storage is essential. I designed five cupboards to go in the hall, so that each member of the family could have their own cupboard for bags, shoes, jackets, the lot. It’s fantastic to have an uncluttered hall.”



GROUND FLOOR

The hall heads into the kitchen-diner, which in turn leads to a study, a shower room, a utility room, a snug and a playroom at the front of the house, an informal living room at the end of the property and the formal living room overlooking the garden.



FIRST FLOOR

Stairs from the informal living room lead up to the boys' bedroom with the family bathroom opposite. The main bedroom with en suite is further up the corridor at the back of the house. Amelia's room with en-suite bathroom and a guest room are above the playroom and study.



Get the
LOOK
PAGE 46



3 Kitchen

A brilliant open-plan family space, the kitchen has a large practical island at one end and a spacious dining area at the other. Baron table, from £1,426; L'Eau bar stool, from £365 each; both Calligaris range, Stocktons. For similar dining chairs, try the Tobias, £65 each, Ikea. White reindeer tree decorations, £2.10 each, Inspirations Wholesale

Christmas for Gemma Richmond is most definitely a family affair. She and her husband Julian, and their three children, Amelia, Max and Tom, spend it at their beautiful four-bedroom house in the village of Puddington, Cheshire, and they're always joined by Gemma's extended family, too. 'There's a roaring log fire, Champagne at breakfast and carols playing, so we're in a festive mood by the time my parents and sisters' families arrive for lunch,' says Gemma. 'There are usually 15 of us around the table. After lunch and presents, we play charades and watch television.'

The Richmonds found their house online four years ago. 'We were living in London, but Julian wanted to

move out and enjoy a change of lifestyle – somewhere we could grow vegetables, have plenty of space and lots of countryside nearby,' explains Gemma. 'We set our sights on Cheshire, as I grew up here and it's where my parents live. When we saw this house, what clinched it was that it has nearly two acres of land and woodland with wonderful walks where we can see all the wildlife you could wish for, from rabbits and squirrels to birds, including tawny owls and buzzards, which are rarely found in gardens.'

Once the laundry house for a big estate, the couple's home is an early Victorian property built in local sandstone. As soon as Gemma stepped inside it, she fell for the high ceilings and tall windows with original shutters, even if the latter were made ➔

4 Snug

Gemma bought a large L-shaped sofa so the whole family can snuggle up on it to watch a movie. 'It's like lying on a bed,' she says

For a similar sofa, try the Loft four-piece unit in House Weave Smoke, £2,386, Raft. For similar cushion covers, try the Alphabet, £18.50, Oliver Bonas



'Keeping neutral paint colours throughout makes the place look bigger, as the rooms aren't huge'

3 of the best CONTEMPORARY PENDANTS



£90

Light and shade
This on-trend, ombre-effect, smoked-glass pendant with black nickel fixings has a futuristic feel
Suki drop pendant, BHS



£180

Chain reaction
Glam chandelier-style glass droplets encased in an unusual chain-link shade
Haslemere clear-glass chain pendant, Laura Ashley



£139

Multifaceted
A smart choice, this panelled-glass hexagonal globe has antique-brass fittings
Small hexagonal ceiling lantern, Marks & Spencer



5 Informal living room

Warmth has been added to this room with rich-coloured leather furniture, while subtle Christmas decorations give it a stylishly festive feel

For a similar armchair, try the Havana, £1,529, Raft. For a similar ottoman, try the buttoned square footstool in Old English Dark Brown leather, £559, Footstools And More. For similar silver baubles, try the Graduation, £4 each, Croft Collection range, John Lewis

from unattractive yellow pine and had rusty hinges. 'I could see the place would need a lot of work to create the modern yet classic look I wanted,' says Gemma. 'There was lots of Seventies peachy-terracotta paint, the extension at the rear was rotting and had a really dirty plastic roof, and as we were looking at the family bathroom, the bath panel fell off. The kitchen was small and ugly, with pine cupboards, a brown Aga, a brown plastic sink and laminate worktops. In fact, it was just a mass of orangey-yellow wood everywhere – floor, cupboards, faux-wooden worktops and table.'

The family moved in just six days before Christmas and the freezing weather prompted them to replace the single-glazed windows with double glazing. 'We kept the existing frames, as they were sound,' says Gemma. 'We also did some minor repair work to the roof, chimney stack and guttering.'

The couple had the whole interior repainted in neutral shades of grey and off-white, then added carefully chosen investment items of furniture and

then less-costly accessories to create a boutique-hotel feel. 'It's amazing what a difference a coat of paint can make,' says Gemma, who is a part-time interior designer (gem@gemcitystyle.com). 'Keeping neutral paint colours throughout makes the place look bigger, as the rooms aren't huge. I also had the original shutters sanded and painted, then had new white shutters made for the snug, kitchen and front-landing windows.'

With the downstairs complete, the bathrooms were next. 'Annoyingly, the family bathroom flooded into my newly decorated living room – I could have cried,' says Gemma. 'So we had it replumbed and refitted, and created a new en-suite bathroom for ourselves at the same time by borrowing a bit of space from our bedroom, plus a bit from the family bathroom, which was unusually long and narrow.'

During the main bathroom refurbishment, the builders found three false ceilings that had been put in over the years, all of which were covered in ➔



Shop for that hotel-chic look

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■ **Brissi** This is the place to go if you're after elegant accessories and pieces of furniture in an elegant palette of white, beige, grey and metallics. Call 020 7229 2323 or visit brissi.com.

■ **The French Bedroom Company** Find glam, French-style accessories and bedroom furniture with a rock-chic edge, from gilded rococo-style beds to quirky poodle-shaped lamps and luxe bed linen. Call 01444 415430 or visit frenchbedroomcompany.co.uk.

■ **Graham and Green** The fashion-led furniture and accessories from this store have a unique hand-picked flavour and range from velvet upholstery to statement mirrors, chandeliers and lamps. Call 020 8987 3700 or visit grahamandgreen.co.uk.



'You need to take your time and live in a new home before rushing in with improvements'



6 *Entrance hall* Gemma has glammed up the space with a silver console table and a striking black mirror

For a similar console table, try the Sylvia in silver, £536, The French Bedroom Company. For a similar mirror, try the Campton, £251, The Chandelier & Mirror Company

7 *Amelia's room*

Like her mother, Amelia has a flair for design and chose a white and silver theme with hints of red for her room. 'Having a large bed in a child's room is a great idea, as it can double up as a guest room when needed,' says Gemma

Kiss wallpaper, £17.95 per roll, Galerie range, Wallpaperdirect. For a similar bed, try the Provencal, from £1,345, The French Bedroom Company. White Christmas tree, £9; 20 battery berry lights, £8; all Paperchase



‘I could see the place would need a lot of work to create the modern yet classic look I wanted’

8 Main bedroom
Soothing shades of grey and off-white were used to create a tranquil feel, with plenty of throws for comfort. Gemma also included touches of silver to add interest

Silver sequin wreath, £16, Paperchase. Gold and silver garland, £27.99, Gisela Graham. For a similar headboard, try the Atlas, £950, Heal's. For a similar green throw, try the Roma in Catkin, from £59, John Lewis

old-fashioned wallpaper. ‘We had them all removed and now the bathroom ceiling is back where it was originally, and is far more in keeping with the rest of the house,’ says Gemma.

The family lived in their newly decorated home for a couple of years, then 16 months ago they decided to tackle the dated kitchen that sat in the middle of the house. ‘It was a really dark room, so we relocated it to the back of the house to get more light and so we could see the children when they were in the garden,’ explains Gemma. ‘We then turned the old kitchen into a playroom with bright new spotlights.’

The couple demolished an old conservatory and hired CWJ Developments (0800 243 577; cwjdevelopments.co.uk) to build a brick and rendered extension across the back of the house, with the kitchen at one end and a dining area at the other. ‘The space in the new kitchen-diner and the views of the surrounding countryside are amazing,’ says Gemma. ‘One of the reasons we created such a large

open-plan space was because we love entertaining. The glass bifolding doors open out onto the garden, so parties are always wonderful whatever the weather.’

Over the length of the renovation project, Gemma learnt an important lesson. ‘I think you need to take your time and live in a new home before rushing in with improvements,’ she says. ‘We waited two years before redoing the kitchen. Before that I would have just replaced the original kitchen and not gone for the extension, which would have been a terrible mistake.’

When it comes to the interior style of the house, Gemma has a philosophy. ‘I try to dress my house the same way I dress myself,’ she explains. ‘I start with really good key pieces – for myself, it would be a good winter coat, boots and bag teamed with high-street clothing. For the kitchen, it would be some investment purchases, such as the designer table and chairs and the statement sofa, accessoried with as many cheaper, more eclectic pieces as you like. Mixing high street with high end is a really successful combo.’

FEATURE VICTORIA JENKINS STYLING ANNABELLE GRUNDY PHOTOGRAPHS COLIN POOLE BOX COPY LISA FAZZANI PLANS PERSONA-ID CLEAR GLASS ANGEL, £3.99; SILVER STAR, £4.99; BOTH GISELA GRAHAM



FOCUS ON Artificial Christmas trees

If you don't like the mess of a real tree or you prefer a more modern look that will last, then go for a faux tree that you can use year after year.

■ Fake your fir

For a tree that can pass for the real thing, choose one with a PVC trunk and branches with moulded polyethylene tips to give a realistic bushy effect. Consider pre-lit options, which will save you from having to untangle and hang the fairy lights each year.

■ Make a statement

Ditch the green and go coloured for a striking look. Black, silver or white are the most commonly bought, but bolder options, such as turquoise, are also available.

■ Take a stand

A good stand will ensure that your tree won't topple or lean to one side, even if heavy ornaments are added to it. Go for sturdy metal if possible, as plastic can be too flimsy, with rubber feet to protect the floor.



9 Family bathroom

All the bathroom fittings were chosen for their simple design and storage capabilities. 'I wanted to be able to put everything away,' says Gemma

For similar bath tiles, try the Oxbow, £49.95 per sq m, Castleford range, Fired Earth. Pool acrylic bath, £129; Soho close-coupled loo with seat, £315; Mino 600 vanity unit and basin, £289; all Bathstore



Get Gemma's look

Bring a grey and cream colour scheme to life with statement furniture and eye-catching accent pieces

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



Ideal
DECO STYLE
Contrast a square fireplace with a circular mirror
Seriana mirror (diameter 80cm), Laura Ashley

£225



Great deal
MIRROR IMAGE
This faceted frame draws the eye
San Marino mirror (diameter 80cm), Argos

£140

Ideal
PURPLE REIGN
Team a smart shade with an elegant base for a glam touch
Atole lamp in purple, Wilko

£12



£18



Great deal
CLASSIC LOOK
Choose a more traditional style
Purple pleated lamp, Asda Direct



Ideal
SOFA CHIC
Go for understated glamour with a neutral leather sofa
Porto two-seater sofa in cream leather (H82cm x W172cm x D93cm), Habitat

£990



Great deal
ADDED COMFORT
A similar style with plumper seat cushions and a higher back
Oracle two-seater sofa (H90cm x W162cm x D83cm), DFS

£649



£225

Ideal
NUTTY TONE
Add warmth with wooden furniture
Garra chestnut table (H61cm x W45cm x D40cm), Laura Ashley



£109

Great deal
RUSTIC OAK The top of this sturdy table has a tongue-and-groove effect
Balmoral lamp table (H55cm x W45.5cm x D55.5cm), Very



Team leather furniture and rich-coloured accessories for a classic scheme



£195

◀ Ideal LUXE LOOK
A romantic choice
Skinny Mimi white chandelier, The French Bedroom Company

Great deal LIGHTING UP
Metal details add a modern twist
Vanessa five-light chandelier, Wayfair.co.uk



£144



ASK GEMMA

■ WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR HOME? 'Its peaceful feeling, particularly in the formal living room.'

■ DESCRIBE YOUR STYLE IN FIVE WORDS 'Contemporary, classic, open, warm and comfy.'

■ WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE INTERIORS SHOPS? 'I love the Andrew Martin store in London, which sells everything from armchairs to vases. I also like Heal's for bedding and kitchen things.'

■ WHAT'S YOUR WORST DECORATING DISASTER? 'I picked the wrong colour for the office-cum-slug before we moved in and it was far too dark.'

■ WHAT'S YOUR DECORATING SECRET? 'Take time to live in a new home before you decide what to do – it's what we did with the kitchen.'



£19.99

◀ Ideal OH DEER
Decorate the mantelpiece with a trophy stag
Great stag's head ornament (H43cm), Shabby Store



£12



£15

Ideal BERRY BURST
Inject some colour with deep-pink accessories
Cotton rib cushion in Mulberry, John Lewis



£8

Great deal PLUM ROLE
Add a touch of opulence with this sumptuous fabric
Soft velour cushion in Plum, Next

Great deal STAG DO
This black-resin version is smaller but just as majestic
Stag's head ornament (H30cm), Asda Direct



£599

Ideal VERSATILE PIECE
An ottoman this size can work as a footstool, seat or coffee table
Scott leather ottoman (H39cm x W107cm x D107cm), Made.com



£469

Great deal BUTTONED UP
A compact alternative in rich chocolate-brown leather
Dover rectangular footstool (H40cm x W100cm x D66cm), DFS

Great deal DETAILED DAMASK
Create a grand feature wall with this beautiful paper
Regency Damask wallpaper in silver 185883, Homebase



£49 per roll

£19.99 per roll

1 Living room

The couple had a gas fire with a new cast-iron surround fitted beneath the existing mantelpiece, which Kieron painted white. 'With the fire lit, the living room really comes into its own at Christmas,' says Becki

For a similar fire surround, try the Chiswick, £734, Gallery range, Fireplaces Are Us. Orson sofa, £699, Made.com. Harebelle cushions, £70 each, Bluebellgray. Snowflake lights, £19.50, Marks & Spencer



'A supersize extension changed our lives'

Don't have room to host Christmas? Neither did the Ashes, until they extended to create the perfect open-plan living space

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

The big
CHANGE

ADDING A LARGE
REAR EXTENSION TO
CREATE AN OPEN-PLAN
KITCHEN-DINER WITH
LIVING AREA, AND
REDECORATING
THROUGHOUT



Get the
LOOK
PAGE 59



Take the 60-SECOND TOUR

BOUGHT FOR	SPENT	NOW WORTH
£370,000	£51,500	£775,000

THE PROPERTY

A five-bedroom, Victorian semi in Wallington, south London. The owners bought it in July 2006.

WHAT IT COST

Building work.....	£40,000
Kitchen.....	£8,000
Bathroom.....	£2,000
New boiler.....	£1,500
TOTAL.....	£51,500

WHO LIVES HERE

Becki and Kieron Ash, with their children, Bailey, five, and Isla, three, their dog, Kai, and cat, Teddy. Becki and Kieron run an agency for photographers, stylists and locations.

THE LOOK

Light and airy, with a pastel palette, Scandinavian influences, stripped wooden floors, comfy sofas and contemporary furniture.

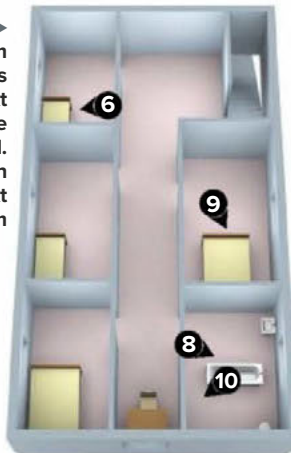


LESSONS LEARNED

“If you’re confident with your plans for an extension, you may not need an architect. A draughtsman can do plans for the planning department for a fraction of the cost.”



FIRST FLOOR ▶
Isla's bedroom faces the stairs with Bailey's next to it and a spare bedroom beyond. The main bedroom is next to the bathroom



▲ GROUND FLOOR

The living room is to the right of the hallway, while the dining room is straight ahead. At the back of the house is the open-plan kitchen/living room and a room that is going to be a utility and shower room



◀ BASEMENT

There's a guest bedroom and bathroom on this floor, which still need renovating

‘We had a rear extension added and completely reconfigured the downstairs layout’



② Living area

'The new extension means we can have a living area with access to the dining room, kitchen and the garden,' says Becki

Sofa, £860; footstool, £150; both Söderhamn range, Ikea. For a similar canvas print, try the Girl With A Heart Balloon, £44.99, Wallfillers



Last-minute CHRISTMAS

Light a yuletide
scented candle
to create an
instant festive
atmosphere





Hosting Christmas can be a daunting prospect for some people, but Becki Ash is really looking forward to it now that her home is finally up to the task after years of improvements. 'There'll be the four of us, plus both sets of grandparents, and I can't wait,' says Becki, who lives with husband Kieron and their children, Bailey, five, and Isla, three. 'In the past, we've travelled between family in Cornwall and the Isle of Wight. While we love to go to both places, this year it will be lovely to stay put in our own home.'

After meeting nearly 20 years ago on the Isle of Wight, the couple lived in several rented flats in London's East End. 'When we decided we wanted to buy something, we went to look around Wimbledon as we knew it was a lovely area, but it was too pricey for us,' explains Becki. 'Someone mentioned Carshalton, which is three miles from Wimbledon

but has a lot of the same amenities and is much cheaper. We bought a two-bedroom flat in a former bakery there in 2004 and did it up ourselves before progressing to this property.'

When Becki and Kieron first found their house, they went to scope out its kerb appeal before making an appointment for a viewing. 'We liked the street and the area, so we went for a proper viewing the next day,' recalls Becki. 'Although it was tired and dated, as soon as we saw the period features and the space, that was it.'

Moving from a small flat to this larger property was a big change for the couple, and the amount of work it needed was rather intimidating. 'Having made a massive leap up, we knew we'd have to save up and do things slowly,' says Becki. 'We'd also set up our business, Oak Management (oakmanagement.co.uk), earlier that year, so we had a lot on our plates already.'

The couple started transforming their house gradually. 'We used literally 100ltr of Dulux's Pure →

3 Kitchen

Although the couple added a new extension to create a larger kitchen, they kept the old Ikea units that Becki had put in years ago and updated them by adding block worktops to the ends of the runs

For similar units, try the Metod, £60 for a W600mm base unit; Karlby worktop in oak, £80 for 1.86m; all Ikea. Shaker peg rail, from £34.38 for 120cm, Jali



Shop for cool clocks

Keep time in style with a statement timepiece

From a small modern desk alarm to an antique grandfather masterpiece, a well-chosen clock can be the perfect decorative accent.

■ **Invest in an antique**

Original grandfather, lantern, wall and mantel clocks bring an authentic sense of history to a room. Kembery Antique

Clocks (0117 956 5281; kdclocks.co.uk) is a family business that stocks affordable, fully working antique clocks, all sold with a one-year guarantee.

■ **Go retro** For designs from the Twenties to the Seventies, try Newgate Clocks (01691 679994; newgateclocks.com)

which sells wall, mantel and alarm clocks to suit traditional and modern homes.

■ **Stick to modern**

Contemporary clocks instantly update a room. Find anything, from gloss-red pendulums to laser-cut aluminium wall clocks, at Jazz It Up (01332 762304; jazzitupinteriors.co.uk).



4 Kitchen

The kitchen has a handy island and breakfast bar with space to store stools underneath. 'It's where Bailey and Isla sit most of the time, rather than the more formal dining room,' says Becki, who went for pale floor tiles to keep the room looking bright. Limestone Matt Almond floor tiles, £24.99 per sq m, Tile Mountain. For similar mosaic tiles, try the Amar, £160 per sq m, Original Style





Brilliant White matt emulsion to paint the whole house and Kieron sanded all the floorboards, so we could let the property out as a photo-shoot location,' says Becki. 'We ran our new business from a studio in the garden, which has its own kitchen.'

As priorities changed and their two children came along, Becki and Kieron needed to start turning their house into a proper family home. 'We had a rear extension added and completely reconfigured the downstairs layout,' says Becki. Built over a four-month period at the end of 2013, the large extension has opened the kitchen right up and allowed the room next to the kitchen to take up its proper place as a dining room. 'We initially did the kitchen back in 2008 and the room next to it became a playroom, although it was never hugely suitable, as there was a wall between the two rooms and you had to keep rushing back and forth, checking on the children,' explains Becki. 'So we saved up and took the plunge

last year. We had spent a long time planning it and we knew what we wanted so we didn't use an architect, just a draughtsman to put the plans together.'

When it came to working out how large an extension they could have, the couple were helped by the fact that there was a conservatory at the end of the kitchen and a Victorian outside loo beyond that. 'The old loo was cute but not practical and the conservatory was horrible, freezing in winter and boiling in summer, so the whole lot came down,' says Becki. 'Although we've gone out 5m from the house, we were allowed to take the loo as part of the original footprint of the house, which gave us extra space, although we had to come in again slightly on the other side and reuse original bricks from the outbuilding in the construction of the extension, which was fine with us.'

Kieron's DIY skills also saved them time and money. Having trained in cabinetry and set building, he was a valuable asset. 'Kieron project-managed ➔

5 *Dining room*

The couple had been using this room as a playroom, but it was rather impractical as they couldn't keep an eye on the children, so they decided to turn it into a dining room and furnished it with the table and chairs they have had for years

For a similar dining table, try the Bjursta, £150; Liatorp console table, £140; Strandmon wing chair in Svanby Grey, £195; all Ikea. Jasper dining chairs, £39 each, House by John Lewis range, John Lewis



6 Isla's room

The tranquil grey-pink colour scheme creates the perfect space for relaxing, while low-level shelving means that Isla can reach her toys and books easily. Walls painted in Dove Grey matt emulsion, £30 for 2.5ltr, Laura Ashley. For a similar bed, try the white truckle, from £865, Little Lucy Willow. For a similar rug, try the Ludde, £30, Ikea

7 Hallway

When she first saw the house, Becki loved the imposing stairs, wide hallway and smart panelling, which just needed a coat of paint to update them. Panelling painted in Lamp Room Gray Estate Eggshell, £51 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Elka deer, £45, Deer Rabbit Wolf Tiger range, Etsy



‘We’ve never really had the room to do a family Christmas here before, but that’s all changed now’

3 of the best **BEDSPREADS**



£120

What a frill
Snuggle up under an old-fashioned quilt scattered with pretty roses
Ditsy floral throw, Marks & Spencer



£145

Trunk cool
Trundle off to the jungle with this colourful elephant and flower quilt
Bedspread, Kids Nelle Collection range, Dunelm

£24.99



Double up
With roses on one side and spots on the other, this offers two options
Antique Rose bedspread, Cath Kidston range, John Lewis

8 Bathroom

'I couldn't believe that the original roll-top bath had been left behind – it's lovely,' says Becki. 'Kieron put up tongue-and-groove panelling in the bathroom to continue the Victorian feel'

Panelling painted in Mole's Breath Estate Eggshell, £51 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. For a similar bath, try the Carron, £950, Victorian Plumbing



'Although the house was tired, as soon as we saw the period features and the space, that was it'

the whole thing and mucked in where necessary. He employed builders as and when he needed them, but he dug the foundations himself with a digger, learning how to do it from YouTube. He worked out that it cost £250 per day to hire a man and a digger, but only £250 a week to hire the digger itself, so he and his father Mike got stuck in one weekend.'

When the extensive building work was finished, the couple were able to decorate in the Scandinavian style they both like, with plenty of pale greys and pastels. 'We've done up all the rooms and we're actually letting the house out as a photo-shoot location again, but as more of a family home this time,' says Becki. 'We still have a couple of projects to do, such as finishing the basement, which was previously a cellar but will be converted into a guest suite. We also need to complete the utility and downstairs shower room, which is currently an unfinished rectangular space behind the grey console table in the open-plan living area.'

But for now, Becki is concentrating on festive preparations. There'll be turkey, goose and Christmas pudding on the newly reclaimed dining table this year. 'Kieron loves to do the cooking over the holidays, and we always have a Christmas pudding and a cake made by his mother Mary,' says Becki.

With the dining room, kitchen, huge new living area and a more formal front room where the tree is, there's plenty of space for everyone in the family to spread out, play games, watch television and do whatever they like over the holiday period. 'The children are that bit older and totally understand what it's all about now, so they'll be opening their stockings in their newly decorated bedrooms, which will be really sweet,' says Becki. 'We've never really had the room to do a family Christmas here before, but that's all changed now.'

9 Main bedroom

'Keeping the bedroom calm was important to me, so I've gone for a neutral palette in creams and greys,' says Becki

Walls painted in Cornforth White Estate Emulsion, £36 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Diamond knitted throw, £69, Marks & Spencer



Get the
LOOK
PAGE 60

10 Bathroom

A rustic-looking ladder provides handy towel storage

For a similar ladder, try the Bastide, £225, Fired Earth



FOCUS ON Disguising radiators

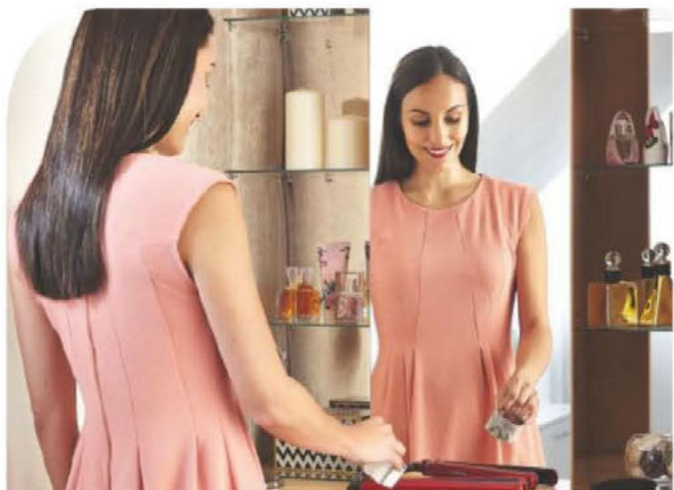
While radiators suit a practical purpose, they can often look ugly and present a bit of a design challenge. Check out these options for making your heating look hot.

■ **Conceal it** Radiator covers are usually fronted with mesh or latticework, which allow heat to circulate effectively. The design should complement the existing period and architectural details of the room for a cohesive look, so the covers don't stand out too much. A cabinet-maker or carpenter can make bespoke, built-in covers based on your specific needs. Alternatively, for a cheaper option, ready-made covers can be found online or at a DIY or hardware store. As well as disguising a less-than-beautiful

radiator, they also double up as useful shelving for decorations.

■ **Shelve it** A less-permanent option is to put a narrow console table in front of the radiator or hang a shelf above it. Prop up a collection of accessories, such as mirrors, picture frames or candles, as they will deflect attention from the unsightly radiator below. Ensure the bottom of the shelf or console is clear of the radiator, so it doesn't singe the wood.

■ **Paint it** A quick, low-cost way to disguise an ugly radiator is to paint it the same colour as the wall behind it. Use a metal primer first, then cover with a solvent-based paint. Once it has been painted, allow it to fully dry before you turn the radiator on.



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A grey-and-white scheme has timeless appeal



Start with these ELEMENTS



SIMPLY STYLISH
Create calm
Engraved Locket
matt emulsion,
£29.99 for 2.5ltr,
Timeless Classics
range, Dulux

GOLDEN RULE
Cover cushions
with luxe velvet
Heavenly Jute,
£60 per m,
Plains collection,
Villa Nova



SOFT TOUCH
Put a plush,
textured rug
underfoot
Rhapsody rug
in Ivory (L140cm
x W80cm), £99,
John Lewis

Get Becki's look

Combine classic, French-inspired pieces in white and grey for an elegant living room

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

LIVING ROOM

Painterly print
Add deep colour with
watercolour florals
Harebelle cushion,
Bluebellgray



£70



£29.99

Glam glass
The mirrored
base adds glamour
Nina Strip table lamp,
Heart of House range, Argos

£125



Grand design
Display a French-style
mirror above the fireplace
Ornamental mirror, Next



£699

Traditional looks
Go grey gracefully with this sofa
Orson three-seat sofa in
Graphite Grey, Made.com



£340

Country chic
Give your room
a French flavour
Aimi coffee table,
Out There Interiors



£59

Softly does it
A cosy merino-wool
blanket in a soft
blue-grey shade
Vesso wool blanket,
Urbanara

Silver shimmer
The aged-effect glass
has a vintage feel
Dreamscape multiwick
bowl, Sainsbury's



£25

Love Becki's style?

Turn a bedroom into a calm retreat with traditional white-painted furniture and chic glass accessories

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



ASK BECKI

■ WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE THING IN THE HOUSE?

'My Ikea corner sofa. It's such a gorgeous blue and fits in with all the pastel tones. It's incredibly comfortable and can fit us all on, so we can snuggle up and watch a film together.'

■ WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE SHOP AND WHY?

'You can't beat TKMaxx. It's so reasonably priced and it has brilliant one-off pieces.'

■ WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR HOME?

'The original features, such as the high ceilings, cornicing, ceiling roses, banisters and old glass in the front door. We've always been period-property fans.'

FEATURE LISA FAZZANI MAIN PHOTOGRAPHS COLIN POOLE

A white-painted cast-iron bed and a rustic wreath give this room a country feel



BEDROOM

Timeless classic

This double bed frame will never lose its appeal
Radcliffe bedstead, Next

£250

Country style

A rustic touch
White berry wreath, Marks & Spencer

£25

Fine knit

A lamb's wool throw with a hit of yellow
Zari Graphite throw, Designers Guild

£160

Aged effect

The antique-brass finish of the base contrasts with its glass details

Antique brass lamp in Warm Grey, Wilko

£30

Relaxing scent

Fill your room with the spicy aroma of clove
Clementine and clove candle, Annabel James

£7.50

Small wonder

This petite bedside table will take up minimal space
Hemnes bedside table, Ikea

£40

delivery in time for christmas

PARIS leather three seater sofa £1499
BOUNDARY two drawer sideboard £499
TWO BLOCK storage coffee table £249
POODLE table light £149
HEX side table £179



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live like this

‘We brought it up to date’

A period property can look great with a contemporary interior, as the Warrens have proved in their cool, coastal home

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



Get the
LOOK
PAGE 71

1 Living room

‘My inspiration comes from the colours on and around beach dunes, so we went for sandy brown furniture and flooring,’ says Sarah. For a similar sofa, try the Bluebell three-seater in Taupe brushed linen cotton, £1,340, Sofa.com



The big
CHANGE

KNOCKING DOWN WALLS
TO CREATE A MORE OPEN
FEEL, CONVERTING THE
LOFT INTO A BEDROOM
AND REDECORATING
THROUGHOUT

Take the 60-SECOND TOUR

BOUGHT FOR	SPENT	NOW WORTH
£497,000	£103,000	£750,000

THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom, Edwardian semi in Hove, East Sussex, built in 1910. The owners bought it in January 2013.

WHAT IT COST

Building work.....	£60,000
Bifold doors and sash windows.....	£10,000
Kitchen.....	£15,000
Bathrooms.....	£10,000
Decorating.....	£8,000
TOTAL.....	£103,000

WHO LIVES HERE

Sarah and Matt Warren. Sarah is a freelance digital creative and Matt runs a travel agency.

THE LOOK

Contemporary style in a period setting, with original Edwardian features standing out against a coastal palette of blues and sandy browns, punctuated with bright colours for a fresh but cosy feel.

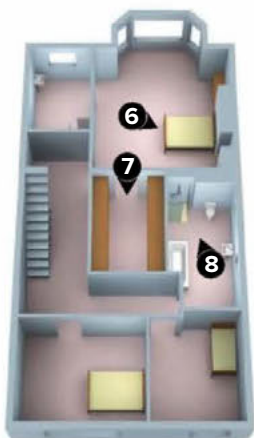


LESSONS LEARNED

“If you’re busy with both of you working, it’s time and money well spent to use an interior designer. Ours was brilliant at sourcing products we didn’t have time to find.”

FIRST FLOOR ▶

The main bedroom with walk-in wardrobe and en suite are at the front of the house. The landing leads to a bathroom and two guest rooms at the back of the property



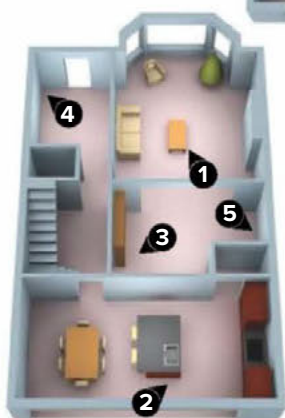
▼ SECOND FLOOR

The loft bedroom has eaves storage and an unfinished en-suite bathroom



◀ GROUND FLOOR

The living room is to the left of the hallway, with the office-cum-snug beyond. There’s a cloakroom under the stairs, while the kitchen-diner is at the rear of the house



2 Kitchen

‘We wanted a modern feel for the units but with references to the traditional, so we chose charcoal-grey wood effect with cream rather than a stark white,’ says Sarah Elba units in Smoke Oak; island in GL4000 handleless in high gloss Vanilla; both from a selection, Master Collection range, Keller Kitchens





Get the
LOOK
PAGE 72

Sarah and Matt Warren have two very good reasons to be looking forward to Christmas this year – it will be the first time they’ve celebrated the festivities as a married couple and it’s their first Christmas in their new home in Hove, East Sussex. ‘I love festive traditions, such as hanging stockings over the fireplace and running downstairs in our pyjamas to open presents,’ says Sarah. ‘It’s a great excuse to get the family together, too. We’ll drink Bucks Fizz for breakfast and eat croissants, then after lunch we’ll go for a stroll down to the sea.’

When the couple first saw the Edwardian property they now own, the elegant exterior looked promising, but it was in a sorry state inside. The previous owners had converted the building back from being an office and two flats, but hadn’t finished the project properly. However, Sarah and Matt weren’t put off by the prospective work. ‘The rooms were big, the ceilings were high, the loft space was enormous and we liked the idea of having a blank canvas to work with,’ says Sarah. ‘We put in an offer almost straightaway.’

The Warrens moved into a rented flat around the corner and talked to a building surveyor about their ideas. Keen to open up the house, they decided to remove the wall between a reception room and a dark dining room to create an open-plan living room and office-cum-snug, and they knocked through the kitchen and another reception room for a kitchen-diner.

Upstairs, they wanted to use space in the main bedroom to create an en suite and convert the loft into a fourth bedroom. However, there were three key items on their wish list that they were desperate ➔

③ Office-cum-snug

‘We thought a wall of shelves would make a fantastic feature,’ says Sarah. ‘The carpenters built each section in the workshop, then put it together on site’

Bespoke shelves, £1,630, DJ Carpentry Solutions



④ Hallway

The walls are painted in a blue-green pastel shade as a nod to the house’s Edwardian roots. Walls painted in Cabbage White Estate Emulsion, £36 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Plain framed mirror, £19.99, Dunelm



Shop for shelving

Find storage to suit your needs

■ **Buy off the peg** For a limited budget, ready-made, modular shelves, such as Ikea’s Billy range (ikea.co.uk), are the ideal choice.

■ **Go made to measure** Get shelves designed to fit a space exactly. Try Jali, which has software to create a design to your specifications. The MDF pieces are then cut to size and delivered ready for you to assemble, fit and paint. Visit jali.co.uk.

■ **Hire a carpenter** Have your shelving custom made to fit your space exactly. Find reputable carpenters at ratedpeople.com and get a few quotes and breakdowns of materials before hiring.



‘We expressed our personalities and added stronger colours with soft furnishings and artwork’

Last-minute CHRISTMAS

Hang fairy lights or
entwine them up
a floor-lamp base
to add some
instant festive
sparkle



5 Office-cum-snug

‘The old reception room, which we use as an office-cum-snug, only had one window,’ says Sarah, ‘so we knocked down a wall to bring in more light’

For a similar print, try the Rolling Stones 1966, £74.99, Art.co.uk. Penryn armchair in Henley French Grey, £999, John Lewis



‘The rooms were big, the ceilings were high and we liked the idea of having a blank canvas to work with’



to include: ‘We wanted to have a walk-in-wardrobe in our bedroom, to increase the size of the family bathroom and have a larder-cum-utility room off the kitchen,’ explains Sarah.


The couple had already thought that sacrificing the second bedroom by splitting it in two would be an ideal way to create the wardrobe and extend the bathroom. However, when they talked it through with the surveyor and the builder, there was a problem with a load-bearing structural wall. Help came their way with interior designer Emma Capron from Bean Interior Architectural Design (01273 382335; beaninteriors.co.uk). ‘When chatting with Emma, we realised she had a good architectural eye, so she worked with the surveyor and suggested moving the doorway for the wardrobe to a position that hadn’t previously been thought viable,’ says Sarah.

The building work was completed over seven months and then the couple got to work on the décor. They decided to go for soft greys and bluey greens, with warm browns bringing hints of the beach in. ‘We wanted a watered-down, windswept coastal scheme to form a modern backdrop without drawing

attention away from the house’s original features,’ says Sarah. ‘We then expressed our personalities and added some stronger colours to the rooms with soft furnishings and artwork.’

A key element in melding the modern with the traditional is the paint used in the hallway, landing and en suite. ‘A pale aqua, it’s like the pastel colours that the Edwardians painted their rooms in,’ says Sarah. ‘It also has a soft beachy look, so it’s perfect as a balance between the old and the new.’

Sarah was mindful of this in other parts of the house, too. The larder-cum-utility room door is in a period style, while the colour used for the island, kitchen cabinets and worktop is a classic cream rather than modern white. Shutters have been fitted at many of the windows and original black radiators have been restored in the main bedroom.

Sarah and Matt have been living in their new home for nearly a year now and they’re appreciating having lots of space ready for Christmas entertaining. ‘It’s fantastic having a big kitchen-diner and enough room for everyone to stay,’ says Sarah. ‘We’re really pleased with how our house has turned out.’ 

6 Main bedroom

‘The original radiator that we had restored inspired the look for this room and it works well with the prints we wanted to put up,’ says Sarah

Le Baiser de l’Hotel de Ville framed print (80cm x 60cm), £74.99, AllPosters.co.uk. For similar table lamps, try the chrome and blue grey glass, £48 for two, Tesco Direct

7 Wardrobe

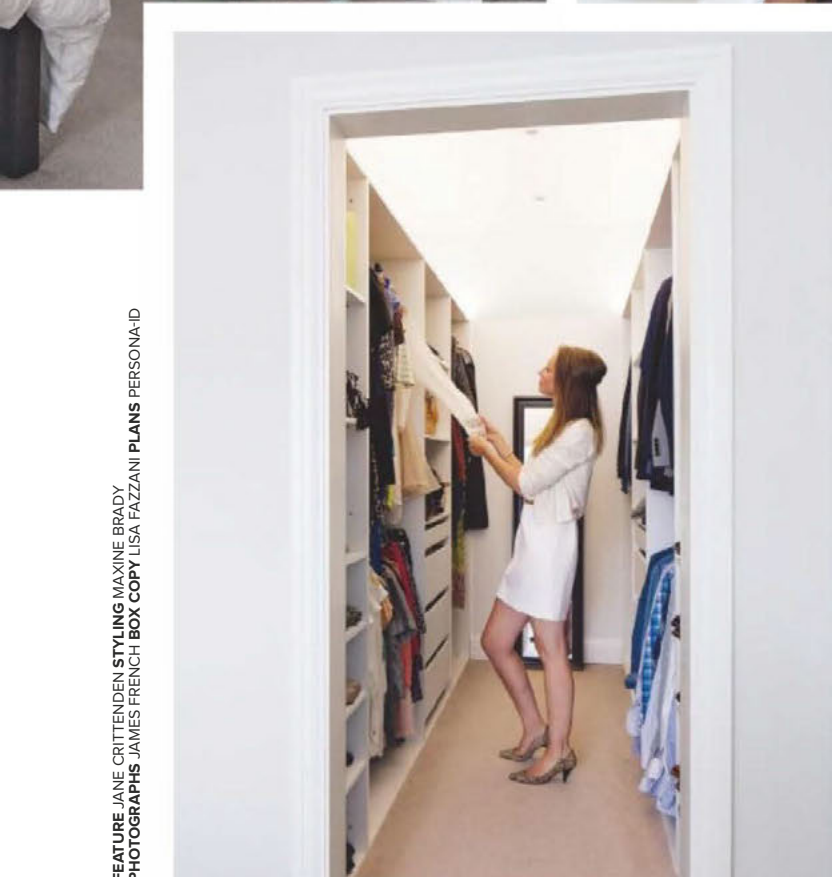
‘I really wanted to have walk-in-wardrobe and luckily our designer was able to make it work,’ says Sarah. ‘I’ve already forgotten what it’s like to have a wardrobe cluttering up space in the bedroom’

For a similar carpet try the Canberra twist in Mocha, £15.99per sq m, Carpetright



8 Bathroom

The couple wanted the bathroom to have a spa feel. 'We love the relaxing space with its sandy tones,' says Sarah. Wave double-ended bath, £257; Toulouse countertop basin, £140, Bauhaus range; both Majestic Bathrooms



3 of the best OFF-THE-PEG PRINTS

Pop-art classic

We love this Warhol tribute to a Hollywood legend

Andy Warhol from Marilyn Green (framed), Tate range, John Lewis



£120



£99

Music monochrome

Bring Beatlemania into your home with a nostalgic image

Beatles 1965 limited edition (framed), Made.com

City smart

Add some NY chic with this bold landmark print

Blue Chrysler (framed), Ben de Lisi range, Debenhams



£25



Children discover the world with their mouth...

Ariel PODS - Always keep them
away from children.



ARIEL



Brightly coloured accessories liven up a neutral scheme



Start with these ELEMENTS



ALL WHITE
Use for a simple background
Strong White Estate Emulsion, £36 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball

WOOD WORK
Try oiled oak for a subtle finish
Dune white oak planks CAS1473, £58.99 per sq m, Quick-Step



CLASSIC STYLE
Keep windows simple with painted shutters
White louvre shutters, from £290 per sq m, Shutterly Fabulous

Get Sarah's look

Bring a pared-back scheme to life with classic furniture and colourful accents

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

LIVING ROOM

Paper light

Open or close the apertures on this to adjust light levels
Luminosity aperture ceiling pendant, Occa-Home

From £70



Simple style

This chunky wooden mirror adds a rustic element
Plank mirror, John Lewis



£645

Timeless good looks

A classic design in forgiving grey textured velvet
Gatsby medium sofa (H91cm x W180cm x D57cm), Asda Direct



£200

Festive fir

Hang this beauty above the mantel
Frosted berry wreath, Next



£28

£44

Keep cosy

Snuggle up on chilly winter evenings
Faux mohair throw in Teal, Oka



Check mate

Pair this with a plain sofa
Oxford ottoman in Chatsworth (H38cm x W90cm x D60cm), Alison At Home



£465

£29.50

Pretty in pink

This vase is also available in clear and grey
Pressed-glass vase, Marks & Spencer



Love Sarah's style?

Make a modern kitchen-diner sparkle with notes of frosty silver, bright white and soft metallics

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

KITCHEN-DINER



Add silver accents for a touch of festive glamour

Cool chrome
Try a row of three above a dining table or island unit
Pluto 1 metal pendant light, B&Q

£62



£65

Star buy
These metal stars are said to bring good luck
Medium Amish barn star, Lovestruck Interiors

Touch of frost
These glass votives look stunning when lit
Frosted candle votives, Alison At Home

£39.50 for three



Winter whites
Put on a faux show
Rose and snowberries in vase, Peony range, John Lewis

£45



£69.99

Colour story
Available in white or a range of bolder colours
Eames-style DSW chair, Zazous



£695

Crowd pleaser
This sleek dining table is perfect for Christmas lunch
Vince oak dining table (H74cm x W95cm x L200cm), Habitat



Snow white
Co-ordinate your Christmas table with a pearly colour scheme
Luxury crackers, Sainsbury's

£10 for six



Silver stands
Available in small, medium and large
Riven taper candle holders, In-Spaces

From £18



ASK SARAH

■ WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR HOME? 'Having a spacious kitchen to entertain in and enough space for our friends to stay over.'

■ DESCRIBE YOUR STYLE IN FIVE WORDS: 'Contemporary, relaxed, modern, vintage, homely.'

■ WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE LOCAL INTERIORS SHOP AND WHY? 'Three Angels Interiors on Hove Street in Hove. It's full of interesting antique and vintage finds, and is beautifully presented.'

■ WHAT INSPIRED YOUR DECORATING STYLE? 'The colours and textures of the sand dunes I used to live near when I was a child.'



FEATURE LISA FAZZANI MAIN PHOTOGRAPHS JAMES FRENCH

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IAMS

Be your own INTERIOR DESIGNER



If you love the stylish schemes in *Ideal Home*, but aren't sure how to transform your own rooms, *we're here to help*. All great looks start with beautiful and inspiring images, so *indulge in a research session* with our decorating section, then *build a moodboard* for your project. *We'll show you how* on page 92. For all the inspiration you need, just turn the page...

Isobel

Isobel McKenzie-Price,
Editorial Director



Magic touch
Bring Christmas sparkle into your home, page 77



Classy colour
Decorate with Tiffany blue, page 90



Pattern parade
Enjoy the latest wallpaper and fabric collections, page 84



Modern luxury
Relax in a cool, serene sanctuary, page 88

FIND INSPIRING MOODBOARDS ONLINE AT
housetohome.co.uk/moodboards

DON'T BRING THE CHRISTMAS WALK INSIDE



Doesn't just mask, truly eliminates odours.

febreze

breathe happy

WEAVE SOME *last-minute magic*

Grab some plain fairy lights, evergreen garlands and packs of baubles, add a little inspiration – and you'll be ready to put on a show...

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO PAGE 83



IDEA

Fill an old crate with logs, pine cones and Christmas-tree offcuts, then drape it with fairy lights for an easy display

Build a display with things you already have: garden lanterns will add candlelight, and vases and buckets can be used to hold gifts or bedecked twigs for simple decoration



IDEAL HOME ♥ MOODBOARD
Fir & Frost



For details of this moodboard,
turn to page 92

Bulk out basic, inexpensive, faux-evergreen garlands and wreaths with real foliage clippings, baubles and fairy lights

Tip Pile cake stands high and fill glass domes or vases with baubles as centrepieces

IDEA

Fill kitchen storage jars with battery-powered fairy lights or cinnamon sticks for instant twinkle and scent

Hit the florist's for armfuls of cheap eucalyptus and gypsophila (baby's breath). Packed into vases, made into mini wreaths and tucked into napkin rings, it's a fragrant, long-lasting way to make a dining room look festive

IDEA

Staple eucalyptus branches into circles, finish with a ribbon bow and tie one onto each dining chair

Tip Make the table sparkle – without adding clutter – by winding fairy lights around the place settings



Fill a garden trough – or even a large loaf tin – with candles and moss

THE INSPIRATION YOU NEED Last-minute magic

LOVE IT Armed with the least-expensive, most uninspired-looking plain garlands, basic fairy lights and multipack baubles left in the shops, you can put together decorative set pieces that have a personal touch. Minimal time and money required...

Ivy garland, £10.50,
Occa-Home



USE IT Get creative and make focal points in key gathering areas: by the living-room mantel and coffee table; the kitchen or dining room table; the hallway, plus in the spare bedroom as a welcome for Christmas visitors.



50 warm white LED outdoor fairy lights, £9.99, Lights4fun

DO IT YOUR WAY

Repurpose jars, crates, baskets and tableware, raid the garden for evergreen foliage, go mad with a spool of ribbon... and have fun!



Silver-effect glass baubles, £25 for 18, Marks & Spencer

IDEAL HOME ♥ MOODBOARD *Bows & Stars*



For details of this moodboard, turn to page 92

Give guests a warm welcome with scented candles displayed on cake stands for a relaxing bedtime atmosphere, and a basket filled with toiletries for them to enjoy during their stay

IDEA

A trio of inexpensive frosted wreaths is all it takes to give a bedroom a touch of Christmas magic



IDEAL HOME ♥ MOODBOARD
Stockings & Stars



For details of this moodboard,
turn to page 92

Tip Trim old plain white pillowcases with ribbons and baubles as quick-fix Christmas stockings



Find all the details IN THESE PICTURES

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



p77 HALLWAY DECORATION AND FURNITURE Wall painted in Ashted Flat Matt Emulsion, £28 for 2.5ltr, Albany Traditions range, Designerpaint. South Pacific Kiribati **carpet**, £44.99 per sq m, Signature collection, Kersaint Cobb & Company. Norden **table**, £150, Ikea; painted in Mid Lead Intelligent Eggshell, £51 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene. **ON TABLE** Numbered **boxes**, £24.95 for six, Rockett St George. Jelly mould **tealight holders**, from £8 each; pine-cone **candle**, £25; mini star-etched **hurricane**, £10; Bell pillar **candle holders**, £25 each; Bell **candle holder**, £25; Dome **tealight holders**, from £6 each; all The White Company. Whitstable **lanterns**, £16 each, Tesco Direct. **Heart decorations**, £2.50 each; **stars**, from £2.99 each; all Dobbies Garden Centres. Bauble and foliage **garland**, £39.50, Marks & Spencer. Zinc **vase**, £10.50; wire **lights**, from £15.50; zinc bucket **planter**, £29; mercuried glass **bowls**, £9.50 for three; all Cox & Cox. **Owl decoration**, £8.50; **candles**, £11.99 each; all Gisela Graham. **Fruit boxes**, £22.50 each, Garden Trading. **ON WALL** Campbell **wall lights**, £70 each, Croft Collection range, John Lewis. New England **mirror**, £240, Brissi. Wire **lights**, as before



p78 LIVING ROOM DECORATION AND FURNITURE Walls painted in Dark Lead Absolute Matt Emulsion, £35 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene. South Pacific Kiribati **carpet**, £44.99 per sq m, Signature collection, Kersaint Cobb & Company. Taj **rug**, from £75; 7ft silver spruce, £250; both Croft Collection range, John Lewis. Babbington small **sofa** (left), from £1,199, Marks & Spencer. Bluebell three-seater **sofa** in Ash (right), £1,540, Sofa.com. For a similar **coffee table**, try the Lantau, £835; for a similar **side table**, try the Lantau, £645; both Oka. **Bookcase**, £195; **console**, £140; both Liatorp range, Ikea. Classic **fire surround** in white marble, £714, Victorian Fireplace range; Britton No4 arched register **grate**, £630; both Chesney's. **ON LEFT SOFA Cushions**, from left: White Linen, £40 each; basket weave in Light Grey, £30, Croft Collection range; both John Lewis. **ON/NEAR RIGHT SOFA Cushions**, from left: Luce in Marshmallow, £40, John Lewis; Orbit embroidered,

£55, Dwell; Luxe silver foiled, £16, BHS; made in Lyra in Voile, £99 per m, Couture Volume 2 collection, Voyage Decoration; basket weave, as before. Large jute **basket**, £104, Raft. Cranley **throw**, £150, The White Company. **ON BOOKCASE** Glitter leaf **garland**, £10; Christmas **decorations**, from a selection; all Dobbies Garden Centres. For a similar **candle holder**, try the patterned set, £5 for three, Asda Direct. Sophia **storage boxes**, £39 for three, Brissi. **ON SIDE TABLE** Luis **table lamp**, £140, Feather & Black. Mercuried-glass **bowls**, £9.50 for three, Cox & Cox. Snow scene **night-light**, £8.50, Gisela Graham. **ON COFFEE TABLE** Serve **cake stand and dome**, £65, LSA International. Zinc **tray**, from £15, Design Vintage. **Garland**, as before. Silver crackle-effect **tealight holders**, £12 for three; lit **glitter house**, £8; all Next. **Decorations**, from a selection, John Lewis. Snowy **mistletoe sprig**, £22.99, Gisela Graham. Large glass jar **vase**, £30, Rockett St George. Naked wire **lights**, from £15.50, Cox & Cox. Number 2 glass **hurricane**, £28.50, Nordic House. Three-wick Winter **candle**, £55, The White Company. **Giftwrap**, from a selection, Paperchase. **Ribbon and gift tag**, from a selection, John Lewis. **ON/ABOVE CONSOLE** Maya ceramic **table lamp**, £100, Living by Christiane Lemieux range, House of Fraser. Silver crackle-effect **tealight holders**, as before. Crackle **balls**, £35 for three, Raft. Mayfair photo **frame**, £24, Brissi. For a similar **silver frame**, try the Champagne geometric, £10, BHS. Tree **candle holder**, £8.99, Gisela Graham. Large unframed Dales Hill **print** (70cm x 70cm), £34.95, Doug Chinnery range, Easyart. **ON/ABOVE FIREPLACE** 5ft eucalyptus **garland**, £120, Gardenia of London. Highbury **candlesticks**, from £32 each, Neptune. White cylinder **candle**, £11.99, Gisela Graham. Large white Hampshire **mirror**, £299, Brissi. Frosted ivy **wreath**, £30, John Lewis; decorated with small festive **bells**, £3.76 for four; snowflake **candle decorations**, £4.99 for three; all Retreat Home. **ON TREE** Christmas **tree topper**, £1, Tesco Direct. Christmas **decorations**, from a selection, Gisela Graham



p80 DINING ROOM DECORATION AND FURNITURE Wall painted in Cornforth White Estate Emulsion, £36 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. **Panelling** painted in

Antimony Elements Emulsion, £35.50 for 2.5ltr, Fired Earth. Wide oak **flooring** ULW1535, £27.99 per sq m, Quick-Step. Harrogate 170cm rectangular **table** in Fog, £795; Harrogate **dining chair** in Fog, £215; both Neptune. Burghley large **buffet**, £1,629, Multiyork. Ullswater 2.1m snow-tip **tree**, £149, Dobbies Garden Centres. **ON DINING TABLE** Sedgill 24-piece **cutlery set**, £40, Ikea. Mezzo **napkins**, £16 for four; leaf spray **napkin rings**, £3.50 each; silver mistletoe **cracker**, £20 for 12, Croft Collection range; all John Lewis. Greenwich **wine glasses**, £40 for six, Neptune. White cylinder **candles**, £11.99 each, Gisela Graham. Naked wire **lights**, from £15.50, Cox & Cox. Silver **table runner**, £6, Tesco Direct. **ON CHAIRS** Porcelain acorn **decorations**, £2.99 each, Dobbies Garden Centres. **Ribbon**, from a selection, Paperchase. **ON TREE** Christmas **tree topper**, £1, Tesco Direct. **Decorations**, from a selection, Gisela Graham. **ON SIDEBORD** Linen **vase** in Taupe, £100; Serve **cake stands**, £75 for three; all LSA International. Silver crackle-effect **tealight holders**, £12 for three, Next. All other **tealights**, from a selection, The White Company. Premier stainless-steel **Champagne bucket**, £10, Asda Direct. Connoisseur **flutes**, £38 for four, John Lewis. **ON WALL** Recycled wood **frames**, from £25 each, Cape Town Frame Collection range, Luma Direct



p82 BEDROOM DECORATION AND FURNITURE Walls painted in Cornforth White Estate Emulsion, £36 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Serenity Orchid **carpet**, £49 per sq m, Crucial Trading. Concentric **rug**, from £250, Niki Jones range, Occa-Home. Camellia king-size **bed**, from £1,095, Button & Sprung. Chatsworth **ottoman**, £345, Brissi. Kendal **chest of drawers**, £895, Lombok. **Pillowcases**, £3 for two, Tesco Direct. **Diamond bauble** (on sack), £7.50 for three, Next. For a similar **circular bauble** (on sack), try the mercuried-glass onion, £3, John Lewis. **ON CHEST OF DRAWERS** Galena **table lamp**, £150, John Lewis. **storage box**, £45 for three; Bonne Nuit **carafe and glass**, £16.50; mercuried-glass **bowls**, £9.50 for three; all Cox & Cox. Serve **cake stand**, £75 for three, LSA International. Cassis signature **candle**, £20; Bell pillar **candle holder**, £25; jelly mould **tealight holder**, from £8; all The White Company. Star **candle set**, £6 for two, Tesco Direct. Coco, Ritz and Savoy **perfume bottles**, from £22 each; all Brissi. Nordic **pitcher**,

£18, Nordic House. Glitter leaf **garland**, £10, Dobbies Garden Centres. Layered **heart decorations**, £7.50 each, Retreat Home. **ON BED** Alina **bedspread and cushion covers**, £60, Ikea. Faux-fur **throw**, £30, Asda Direct. Herringbone **throw**, £24, Littlewoods. Antique-lace square **pillowcases**, £15 each, Holly Willoughby range; luxe silver-foiled **cushion**, £16; both BHS. For a similar **duvet cover**, try the Waves, £210, Peter Reed range, John Lewis. Brompton Oxford **pillowcases**, from £22 each, The White Company. **Cushion** made in Lyra in Voile, £99 per m, Couture Volume 2 collection, Voyage Decoration. Pepper **cushion**, £30, Raft. **ON OTTOMAN** Throw, £44, Oka. **Tray**, £12; **heart**, £3.50, Croft Collection range; **ribbon and tag**, from a selection; all John Lewis. **Towel bale**, £15 for a four-piece set, Littlewoods. La Maison de Senteurs **toilettries**, from £7.50 each, both Marks & Spencer. **Giftwrap**, from a selection, Paperchase. Rose **candle**, £20, The White Company. **Toiletry bag**, £15.59, Retreat Home

PICK THE Perfect pattern

Need inspiration? Check out the best of this season's fabrics and wallpapers

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

Try a dramatic botanical

WHY WE LOVE THEM When they are placed against a dark background, prints undergo quite the transformation. Whether they are flora and fauna or berries and branches, designs appear more striking, the colours really pop and the prints take on a dramatic, fairytale-like quality.

WHERE TO USE THEM Your instincts are probably telling you that dark walls will make a room look smaller than it actually is, but this isn't always the case. The right pattern, together with cleverly arranged lighting, can transform a small room into a warm, inviting space. Dark backgrounds will work well in bedrooms and dining rooms, creating a cosy, enveloping feel, but living rooms and cloakrooms can also benefit from their sumptuous,

gothic-esque glamour, giving a dramatic, strong look.

HOW TO USE THEM Embrace them wholeheartedly by covering walls or upholstery in a standout print. If you're not feeling that brave, dip your toe in the look by focusing on a single feature wall and a few scatter cushions. Lighting is key, so ensure the room is lit sufficiently from a variety of sources, such as table lamps, wall lights and pendants.

HOW TO ACCESSORISE THEM Stick to furniture in classic shapes and materials, such as wood, avoiding anything too contemporary or glossy. Traditional, vintage and mid-century styles will all pair up beautifully with prints on dark backgrounds, but try to avoid lots of antiques – you don't want your home to end up looking like a set from a Tim Burton movie.

3 places to buy DARK PRINTS

Osborne & Little Nina Campbell's Wallpaper Album 3 collection is packed with pretty designs – we love Farfalla (butterflies) and Aquarium (fish), from £56 per roll.

Sanderson A wealth of dramatic botanical prints are on offer, from contemporary Sparkle Coral to traditional Ottoline and Rosalie, from £42 per roll.

Wallpaperdirect Check out the Albany Fashion range for bold, dark prints, from as little as £12.99 per roll.

TOTALLY TROPICAL
Available in two colourways
Sofa covered in Jungle Beat,
£55 per m, Matthew Williamson
range, Osborne & Little



‘Choose your print carefully – top-to-bottom trailing patterns will add height to a room, while oversized designs create instant impact’

Ginevra Benedetti,
Features Editor

TOP 10 Wallpapers

Striking, dark floral papers

Make a statement with a moody botanical

1

Monochrome magnolia

A simple two-tone print
Magnolia 01429MAGB, £15 per roll, Designer Selection range, I Love Wallpaper

2

Flower power

Orange blooms add a splash of bold colour
Albany Fashion FD30977, £17.99 per roll, Albany range, Wallpaperdirect

3

Colour burst

White and green designs are also available
Margarita in Charcoal/Multi 97880, £30 per roll, Feature Wallpaper

4

Mixed bunch

Great for a retro scheme
Oodi in Pink/Orange 17921, £49.95 per roll, Marimekko 4 collection, Galerie Wallcoverings

5

Vertical trail

A lovely blend of creamy lilacs and soft greenery
Lomasi NCW4004-01, £56 per roll, Wallpaper Album 3 collection, Nina Campbell range, Osborne & Little

More over the page...



▲ BERRY PICKING

If you prefer a lighter look, this new wallpaper also comes with pale pink berries against a white background
Autumn Berry in Blackberry, £78 per roll, Barneby Gates

◀ WINTERY BEAUTY

Delicate trailing snowdrops against a black background create a stunning effect
Signe 403-91, £84 per roll, Brunnnsnäs collection, Sandberg



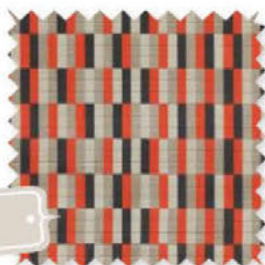
Dark Fest floral cushion, £19.50, Marks & Spencer

IDEAL V GREAT DEAL

Spend or save on these tessellation patterns

TUBE LINE
Inspired by London Underground's vintage upholstery
District in Neon Orange K5097/05, Kirkby Design

£75 per m



CHECK MATE
An eye-catching linear design that would be perfect for a teen's bedroom
Helsing, Ikea

£5 per m

THE TOP 10 WALLPAPERS ...continued

‘Monochrome or multicoloured – both will look fantastic set against black’

Ginevra Benedetti,
Features Editor

6

English classic

John Henry Dearle
created the print in 1912

Leicester 212542,
£62 per roll, Archive II
Wallpapers collection,
Morris & Co

7

Think big

The oversized peonies
would be perfect for
a striking feature wall

Muse 331501, £62
per roll, Eijffinger
range, Blendworth

8

Rose garden

Bronze blooms provide
a warm, decadent feel

Ashfield Floral in
Tobacco PRL027/06, £75
per roll, Ralph Lauren
range, John Lewis

9

Lovely lotus

This wide-width paper
is perfect for a bedroom

Lotus Blossom in Ebony
1601/914, £80 per roll,
Galleria collection,
Prestigious Textiles

10

Black and blue

Inspired by trees at
Hampton Court Palace

Royal Garden 98/1004,
£95 per roll, Historic
Royal Palaces collection,
Cole & Son



Retreat in
Monochrome,
£22 per roll,
John Lewis

FEATURE GINEVRA BENEDETTI PHOTOGRAPHS RHAPSODY MEDIA

WHAT'S NEW AT

John Lewis

Check out the latest in-house designed wallpapers and fabrics from this high-street favourite

THE COMPANY The company started out as a fabric shop in the 1860s and, despite introducing furniture and fashion, it has always retained a foot in the world of decorating. As well as offering a wide selection of wallpapers and fabrics from other brands, John Lewis has a rich history of creating its own designs, too.

THE NEW COLLECTION This season, the John Lewis Design Studio has introduced a host of new products to the House by John Lewis range, plus the new Copenhagen and Croft ranges. The wallpapers embody the latest trends, with elegant graphics in subtle shades of slate and putty for Croft, dreamy monochrome-hued patterns to sit with Copenhagen, and bold and colourful graphic prints to team with the House range. There's

also a wide selection of co-ordinating fabrics and wallpapers in the core range, alongside three new floral wallpaper prints created by ex-Osborne & Little designer Maggie Levien.

WHY WE LOVE IT The designs are all great value, priced from just £15 per roll of wallpaper and per metre of fabric, and since they echo the main interiors trends, you can easily find a wide range of furniture and accessories to match. The styles are also quite diverse so, from the classic look of the Croft designs to the cool contemporary feel of the House by John Lewis range, there's definitely something for everyone.

Botanica Bird in
Black (top), £22 per
m; Wallflower in Steel
(bottom), £24 per m;
both John Lewis



The power of soft.



Boutique HOTEL SPY

Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons

We took a sneak peek into this gorgeous hotel to bring you luxe style inspiration

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

LOCATION Hidden away in the glorious Oxfordshire countryside, this hotel is best known for its two-Michelin-starred restaurant – the showcase of Raymond Blanc.

ROOMS The hotel is a perfect example of the honey-coloured stone buildings for which the Cotswolds are famous. All of the 32 bedrooms and suites have marble bathrooms, with accommodation ranging in size from superior rooms to superior suites. The crème de la crème is the Blanc de Blanc suite (pictured), which has a private living room, dressing area, terrace and garden. Its tranquil scheme furnished with refined, French-style accessories has a truly luxurious feel.

FAMOUS FOR Its restaurant of the same name. Tasting menus start at £140 per person, so a combination of a meal in the restaurant and an overnight stay is seen by many visitors as a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

The manor house is set in 30 acres which guests are free to explore, although most content themselves with a wander around the spectacular vegetable and herb gardens, where produce for the restaurant is grown. **CELEBRITY GUESTS** Hotel staff are admirably cagey about famous visitors, but many well-known chefs have worked with Raymond Blanc at Le Manoir, including Marco Pierre White, Paul Heathcote and John Burton-Race.



FACT FILE

HOTEL

Belmond Le Manoir
aux Quat'Saisons

ADDRESS

Church Road, Great
Milton, Oxford
OX44 7PD

PRICE

From £550 for
a superior room,
including breakfast



CONTACT

01844 278881;
belmond.com/
le-manoir-aux-quat-
saisons-oxfordshire

YOU CAN BUY THE LOOK...



£198

Lavish looks

Make it opulent

Salerno mirror,
The Chandelier
& Mirror Company



From
£229

Dressing up

This slimline table could
double up as a desk
Southwold dressing
table, Tesco Direct

£149

Cosy layers

Subtle texture
Washed diamond
bedspread,
Lexington

£25

Softly does it

A waffle design
Sanctuary cushion,
Bedeck range,
House of Fraser



From
£9

Versatile vase

Bring in colour
with cut flowers
Cube vase, LSA
International
range, John Lewis

FEATURE SARAH FARLEY



Create your own tranquil oasis by sticking to a palette of warm whites for walls, soft furnishings and furniture. Keep the look cosy by adding lots of soft, natural textures



Layer white on white in contrasting textures to create a room that's made for relaxing

IDEAL GREAT DEAL

Get the look whatever your budget

Smooth seat
Opt for square lines
White cube ottoman,
Neofurn



GLITTERY GLOW
Silver Lurex gives the grey linen shade added sparkle
Gracie table lamp, BHS



GLASS SHARD
A cut-glass base with a simple silk shade
Large Pyramid table lamp, Next

IDEAL HOME ♥ MOODBOARD
Soothing Sanctuary



LOVE THE LOOK

Layer up shades of white to create calm, then add textured fabrics and lace detail for a luxurious feel

For more moodboards turn to page 92

COLOUR SCHOOL

Tiffany blue

This is a cool colour inspired by the iconic packaging of the jewellery store

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN,
TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



“Tiffany blue is not a shade for the faint hearted, so if you're nervous of adding **bold colour** all over, use it in alcoves or on one feature wall, instead. The trick is to balance out this dynamic hue by teaming it with white furniture and a **statement mirror** or a distinctive piece of art. Add a touch of old-fashioned **glamour** at Christmas with vintage-style **metallic accessories** and gold-painted fresh foliage”

Carol Wortley-Bishop, stylist



Frosty effect
Ramp up the glamour with some sparkle
Pine-cone decorations, £6 each, Berry Red



Aged feel
Get vintage style with distressed finishes
Distressed aqua frame, £56 for four, In-Spaces

Glam glass
Keep the look elegant with smart pieces
Maxi tealight holder, £1.50 for three, Hema



Tick tock
Add colour to a neutral wall
Donald clock, £145, Sweetpea & Willow



Good as gold
Make it modern with metallics
Light turquoise chevron segment cushion, £26, Debenhams



Time for tea
Indulge yourself with a beautiful set for one
Miss Darcy tea-for-one set, £22.50, Oscar & Eve



Snuggle up
Add cosy texture
Hamilton throw in Duck-Egg Blue, £70, Laura Ashley



Chic seat
Paris meets NYC
Velvet tub chair in Aqua, £445, Oliver Bonas



BE
CANDLE
SAFE

LESSON NOTES

Build a refined scheme with one of these shades

AQUAMARINE

Make an impact with this bold hue

POWDER BLUE

Give your room a softer look with blue-green tones

FADED SHADE

Create calm with a pale sky blue

Turquoise matt emulsion, £13.95 for 2.5ltr, Wilko

Pale Powder Estate Emulsion, £36 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball

Gentle Sky Absolute Matt Emulsion, £35 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene



Combine Tiffany blue walls with white furniture and decorations for a glamorous, wintry scheme

Match giftwrap to your scheme for a sophisticated look

IDEAL HOME ♥ MOODBOARD Tiffany Blue



LOVE THE LOOK

Break up this lively shade of blue with neutral fabrics and soft-white accessories. Add glamour with glittering gold decorations on your tree

For more moodboards turn to page 92

FIND ALL THE DETAILS

DECORATION AND FURNITURE Walls painted in Cool Aqua matt emulsion, £25.99 for 2.5ltr, Crown Paints. Spearmint Houndstooth carpet, £75 per sq m, Padstow range, Brintons. Lewes rug, £175, Laura Ashley. Devonshire fire surround, £1,380; interior panel, £420; both Chesney's. Coast four-seater sofa, £1,199; Coast armchair, £648; both French Connection range, DFS. Great white coffee table, £345, Loaf. Beckworth side table, £190, Graham and Green. Snowflakes, £40 for three, Retreat; for a similar gold spray paint, try the Projekt, £6.98 for 400ml, Plasti-Kote range, B&Q. Gold tealight holders, £4 each, Tesco Direct. White tealight holders, from £8 each, The Christmas Home range, Notonthehighstreet.com. Christmas tree jars, £40 each; mini trees, £12.50 for nine; all Cox & Cox. Reindeer, £3 each; stars, £3 each; all Gisela Graham range, The Contemporary Home. Ivy garland in spray paint, as before. Derwent fire tools, £354, Chesney's. Giftwrap, from £2.50 per roll; ribbon, £1.75 for 3m; all Paperchase. ON SOFA Cushions made in: Linara Peacock; Linara Lagoon; both £34.50 per m; Cybelle Viridian, £125 per m; all Romo; Dorchester Turquoise, £40 per m, Clarke & Clarke.

Anastasia blanket, £75, Laura Ashley. ON ARMCHAIR Cushions made in: Dorchester Turquoise, Linara Peacock, both as before. ON COFFEE TABLE Cake stands, £75 for three, LSA International. Favour boxes, 49p each, Confetti Heaven. Connoisseur Rose glasses, £32 for four, John Lewis. Snowflake, white tealight holder, both as before. Tree tealight holder, £14.50, Timea Sido range, Swanky Maison. Tray, £65 for three, The White Company. Wilton crackers, £20 for six, Laura Ashley. Sylt throw, £65, David Fussenegeger range, Heal's. ON SIDE TABLE Iris lamp base, £160, Pooky. For a similar shade, try the Samantha candle, £13, John Lewis. Web bowl, from £22, Swanky Maison. Gold tealight holder, as before. Giftwrap and ribbon, as before. Framed dictionary print, £25, Homes by Holmes range, Notonthehighstreet.com. Ribba frame, from £1.75, Ikea. Advent calendar card, £2.95, Aspen & Brown. Favour box, as before. House, £3.50, Tesco Direct. Hurricane, from £19.95, Nordic House. Baubles, from £2.99 each, Dobbies Garden Centres. ON RIGHT BOOKCASE Candle holders, £12 each, The Christmas Home range, Notonthehighstreet.com. Favour boxes, hurricane, print, all as before. Joy card, £2.50 for ten, Tesco Direct. Vase, £21.50, Pentreath & Hall. ON TREE Dove, £26.50 for three, Jo Heckett range, Notonthehighstreet.com. Baubles, hearts, from a selection, Dobbies Garden Centres, John Lewis, Tesco Direct. Snowflakes, £7.65 for three, Aspen & Brown

Be inspired by our MOODBOARDS

We use expert interior-design techniques to create our decorating looks. Each starts with a moodboard, like the ones here. Use one of these as a starting point for a stylish new scheme

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN,
TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

FIND MORE
MOODBOARDS
ONLINE AT
[houseto
home.co.uk/
moodboards](http://housetohome.co.uk/moodboards)

CLASSIC CHRISTMAS

Go rustic with natural linens and red berries

Rustic Oak Natural laminate **flooring**, £29.49 per sq m, Quick-Step. Grain Stripe Peony **fabric**, £39.50 per m, Ian Mankin. **Napkins**, £14 each, The Linen Press. Kraft **paper**, £3 for 5m, Paperchase. **Ribbon**, from £4.50 for 10m, Jane Means. **Stocking**, £3.50; vintage **spoon**, £12; both Swanky Maison. **Cat**, £4.75, Aspen & Brown. **Cracker**, £20 for 12; potted **berry tree**, £6 each; all John Lewis. Linen **dinner plate**, £216 for a 16-piece set, Denby. Red Calico **side plate**, £9.50; **bowl**, £10; both Burleigh. Chateau Grey **matt emulsion**, £38 for 2.5ltr, Sanderson. **Bird**, £5, The Contemporary Home. **Sprigs** from garland, £8, Hobbycraft

SEE IT IN
A ROOM...
page 16



STOCKINGS & STARS

Create calm with a silver and grey palette

SEE IT IN
A ROOM...
page 82

Background painted in Cornforth White **Estate Emulsion**, £36 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Herringbone **throw**, £24, Littlewoods. Antique lace housewife **pillowcase**, £20 for two, Holly Willoughby range, BHS. Mercurised **heart trinket bauble**, £3.50, John Lewis. Serenity Orchid **carpet**, £49 per sq m, Crucial Trading. **Snowflakes**, £3.50 each, Gisela Graham

Design your own moodboard

Cheat your way to a professional finish

1 Choose your base colour

Whether it's flooring or a wall, this will be the largest area of colour in your room, so place a generous sample of it onto your board. Including carpet samples will help you think about texture, too.

2 Add an accent tone

A dramatic contrast or an accent just a few tones away from your base colour? Use your moodboard to play with options and layer it with swatches of fabric, scraps of wallpaper and paint colour charts.

3 Find the right accessories

These will really set the tone in your room – go for ones that share an accent colour and stick to a single theme. Don't mix styles, or your finished scheme will look messy rather than effortlessly eclectic.



BOWS & STARS

Channel a vintage vibe with white table linens, mercurised-glass baubles, glittering decorations and distressed-wood pieces

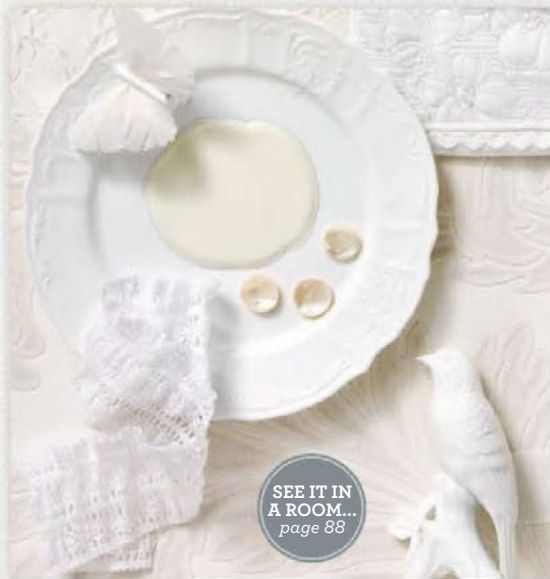
Silver **table runner**, £6; star Christmas **tree topper**, £1; both Tesco Direct. Cornforth White **Estate Emulsion**, £36 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. Wide oak **flooring** ULW1535, £27.99 per sq m, Quick-Step. Recycled wood **frame**, from £25, Cape Town Frame Collection range, Luma Direct. Silver mistletoe **cracker**, £20 for 12; Mezzo **napkin**, £16 for four; flower bead **napkin ring**, £3; all John Lewis. Antique silver **baubles**, £3.10 each, Gisela Graham

SEE IT IN
A ROOM...
page 80

SOOTHING SANCTUARY

Mix soft shades of white for a tranquil scheme

For a similar **wallpaper**, try the Acanthus Scroll, £55 per roll, Morris & Co range, Wallpaperdirect. For a similar **cushion cover**, try the White Leighton, £8.99, Dunelm. For similar **lace edging**, try the selection at MacCulloch & Wallis. For a similar **plate**, try the Prairie dessert plate, £9, Rachel Ashwell Shabby Chic Couture. All White **Estate Emulsion**, £36 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. For a similar feather **butterfly decoration**, try the bridal butterflies, £5 for 24; for similar **shell buttons**, try the Vogue Star, £1 for five; all Hobbycraft. For a similar **bird ornament**, try the porcelain **bird**, £3.99, Dobbies Garden Centres



SEE IT IN
A ROOM...
page 88

FIR & FROST

Cosy up with chunky knits in grey tones

Background painted in Dark Lead **Absolute Matt Emulsion**, £35 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene. South Pacific Kiribati **carpet**, £45 per sq m, Kersaint Cobb & Company. **Silver cushion**, £16, BHS. Basket weave **grey cushion**, £30; for a similar **cup**, try the egg cups, £16 for four, Queensberry Hunt range; **gift tag**, from a selection; all John Lewis. **Giftwrap**, from a selection, Paperchase. Mercuried **bowls**, £9.50 for three, Cox & Cox. **Heart**, £2.50, Gisela Graham

SEE IT IN
A ROOM...
page 78

Decorating?

FOLLOW THE 3 GOLDEN RULES

1 THE 70-20-10 RULE For a truly balanced scheme, keep 70% of the elements (say, the walls and floors) as one colour, 20% in a second colour (prints and fabrics) and add 10% of a vibrant accent (accessories).

2 THE PATTERN RULE If you're mixing patterns, use large with medium or medium with small, never large with small. Choose prints that share a colour in common for an ultra-smart, co-ordinated look.

3 THE PAINTED BOX RULE The look of paint changes according to the time of day and the light in a room. Paint the inside of a large box with a tester to create a miniature 'room' and see how the paint colour changes within a 3D space.

♥ AND FINALLY... Always add a surprise. A focal point – whether it's a feature wall, a huge mirror or a piece of art – is the short cut to a 'wow' room.



SEE IT IN
A ROOM...
page 90

TIFFANY BLUE

Make it glam with blue fabrics and gold decs

Spearmint Houndstooth **carpet**, £75 per sq m, Brintons. **Fabrics** from top: Linara Lagoon, £34.50 per m; Cybelle Viridian, £125 per m; both Romo; Dorchester Turquoise, £40 per m, Clarke & Clarke; Linara Lagoon, as before. Crochet **snowflake**, £7.65 for three, Aspen & Brown. **Giftwrap**, from £2.50 per roll, Paperchase. **Ribbon**, £5 for three 2m rolls; **reindeer**, £3 each; all Gisela Graham range, The Contemporary Home. Wooden **decorations**, £5.49 for 10, Swanky Maison. **Dove**, £26.50 for three; **tealight holders**, £12 each; all Notonthehighstreet.com. Greige LT **eggshell** (top), £47 for 2.5ltr, Sanderson. Cool Aqua **matt emulsion**, £25.99 for 2.5ltr, Crown Paints

Ideal Home's *Complete Guide To*

Christmas

FROM THE EDITORS OF BRITAIN'S BESTSELLING HOMES MAGAZINE

753 FESTIVE IDEAS
to make it special

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the best
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♥ STOCKINGS
♥ CRACKERS
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2014



DECORATING INSPIRATION

Make your home special for the holidays

Make with
the kids!



EASY CRAFT IDEAS

Hand-made gifts for friends and family



FESTIVE FOOD

54 simple and delicious seasonal recipes

CHRISTMAS TABLE SETTINGS ❄️ HAND-MADE GIFT TAGS ❄️ STOCKINGS TO BUY & MAKE

ON SALE 1 OCTOBER

IN ASSOCIATION WITH LAURA ASHLEY

PROPERTY PROJECTS

Get the very best advice and inspiration for all of your home-renovation projects

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



REAL HOME IMPROVEMENT



'We needed all the extra space we could get'

When Sarah and David Richardson spotted a four-bedroom Victorian house for sale on the same road they were renting on, they immediately arranged a viewing. It had a tumbledown conservatory and a lean-to, but they were able to visualise how it would look if they replaced these structures with a single-storey extension with glass panels across the width of the house. The couple, who have four daughters, had the extension designed to create an open-plan kitchen-diner and living space. The builders

concealed the structural supports so as not to take away from the room's open feel. 'It works really well and is far more practical than a standard conservatory,' says Sarah.



The living area doubles as a playroom

FIND OUT MORE...

- The supporting walls at the rear of the Richardsons' house were removed to create an open-plan space.
- To avoid having steel supports breaking up the

open-plan feel of the room, the builders concealed them within the ceiling. ■ 'One section of the ceiling sits lower than the pitched roof,' says James

Bernard, director of building company Plus Rooms. 'A cradle of steelwork provides support and additional steels are concealed in the roofline.'

SOURCEBOOK Storage companies

Don't know where to start? Try these top five places...

ACCESS SELF STORAGE 0800 327 7134; accessstorage.com

The branches across London, the South East and the Midlands contain units of various sizes – its website has a size calculator to help you work out how much space you require. It also has partnerships with van-hire companies, so it can pass on discounted rates to its customers.

BIG YELLOW SELF STORAGE 0800 783 4949; bigyellow.co.uk

This instantly recognisable company has 67 facilities nationwide, with room sizes of up to 400sq ft. Prices vary per region (busy areas near cities will cost more).

HENFIELD SELF STORAGE

0808 271 0356; storage-units.co.uk

This family owned company offers secure storage units at competitively low prices. There are five branches in the South East, and others in Glasgow, Birmingham and Bradford. If you pay for three months' storage in advance, you can have your items collected for free.

LOVESPACE 0333 111 0777; lovespace.co.uk After you've packed your boxes, Lovespace will collect your items for free when it suits you. Everything you store, from bags to boxes to bikes, costs between £1.95 and £5.95 per item per month.

SAFESTORE 0800 444 800; safestore.co.uk The largest self-storage company in the UK offers 24-hour access, with many branches open seven days a week. The price will depend on the amount of space you need. Cardboard boxes and bubble wrap are available to buy on site.



The units at Safestore are ideal for stowing away all your clutter



ES400 pivot door 800, £345; ES400 side door 800, £271; both Energy Collection range, Twyford



E200 basin and vanity unit, £512, Energy Collection range, Twyford

TOP TREND

Affordable design

Need a sleek new look for your bathroom at a purse-friendly price? Twyford's Energy Collection range offers great-value designs that don't compromise on style. The collection includes three sanitaryware and furniture ranges, with special features including compact designs for small spaces, contemporary high-gloss finishes and shower enclosures with pivot, sliding and bifold doors. There's a range of flexible installation options, so you can opt for wall-mounted or freestanding designs. Prices start from £80.78 for the E100 W55cm basin.

ON THE SURFACE

Chevron chic

If your staircase is crying out for a revamp, check out the latest launch from flooring company Crucial Trading. The new Wool Fabulous collection features a vibrant, chevron-patterned floorcovering made from hard-wearing 100% wool, priced at £140 per sq m. Available as either a narrow or wide-gauge design, and in a choice of five different colourways, it's ideal for bordered rugs or runners, or even an entire carpet to make a big impact.

WFN501 Fabulous Diamond Narrow (far right); WFW601 Fabulous Diamond Wide; both £140 per sq m, Crucial Trading



Keep it handy

Protect your garden furniture from the elements this winter with Rust-Oleum's NeverWet. Simply spray two coats onto metal, wood or canvas to give it a liquid-repelling coating.

Genius idea

Protect furniture from rain and ice with NeverWet, £15, Rust-oleum range, B&Q



Project
**KNOW
HOW**

Embarking on a self-build project? See selfbuildportal.org.uk for invaluable advice to help find the right architect, surveyor or structural engineer, plus a host of contractors recommended by the Federation of Master Builders in your area



Keep track

The LCD display shows the wash time remaining and the high spin speeds reduce the drying time

Beko WM171641 7kg integrated washing machine, £329, AO.com

Top marks from customers

Beko's large-capacity washing machines have received an average 9 out of 10 customer-review score*

Tackle chores with these DREAM MACHINES



See my helpful videos at housetohome.co.uk/beko to find out what to look for when you buy your next appliance

that operate quietly and can be integrated behind a door panel to match your units. However, if you have a large family, a Beko freestanding washing machine with at least an 8kg capacity will cut down on the number of machines you'll do each week. Not sure of the capacity you need? Think of each kilogramme as an outfit, so a top, a pair of jeans and underwear and socks.

Save time and money

Beko's washing machines have quick-wash programmes that get 2kg of washing clean in 14 minutes, or at least 8kg done in 39 minutes, while high-spin speeds of up to 1,600rpm will wring washing out a treat, reducing drying times. Its dishwashers have a 30-minute quick wash, while selected EcoSmart models tackle a full load using just 6ltr of water. As this is water you'd otherwise have to pay to heat if washing by hand, you'll save money on utility bills.

Decide on your style

I believe the best dishwashers and washing machines shouldn't be too noisy, especially if you have an open-plan kitchen. If you agree, look out for models

CLEAN UP IN STYLE

Beko has smart laundry and dishwashing options



£235

Squeeze it in

It may be only 45cm wide, but this Beko dishwasher can handle 10 place settings

Beko DW451 45cm integrated dishwasher, AO.com



£247

Rack 'em up

This takes 12 place settings, and you can adjust the top basket to create extra space

Beko DW603 integrated dishwasher, AO.com



£349

Big performer

Great for families, this 8kg-capacity machine can clean 40 T-shirts at once

Beko WM181341 integrated washing machine, AO.com

To discover more...

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EXTREME *Transformations*

AFTER



The Fifties house lacked exciting features and had a traditional layout

BEFORE



From dark and dreary...

A combination of two glazed extensions has transformed Alex and Sophie Nicholls' dull Fifties house into an exciting design statement

Take the **60-SECOND TOUR**

THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom, detached house in Winchester, Hampshire, built in the Fifties.

WHO LIVES HERE

Alex and Sophie Nicholls, with Matilda, three, and Freddie, three months. The couple are doctors.

WHAT THEY DID

The Nicholls added a ground-floor rear extension with a wall of

glazing across the width of the house, to create an open-plan kitchen, dining and living room. They also had a wooden-clad first-floor extension built to add another bedroom and en suite.

WHAT IT COST

The couple paid £590,000 for the house in 2011 and spent around £175,000 extending and renovating it. The property is now worth around £800,000.

FIRST FLOOR ►

Upstairs, there are four bedrooms, one with an en suite, and the main bathroom



◄ GROUND FLOOR

There's a snug, a utility room and a study at the front and an open-plan kitchen, living and dining room in the rear extension





to light and contemporary

Sophie and Alex Nicholls knew a big renovation project was waiting in the wings when they bought a detached Fifties house in Winchester, Hampshire, in 2011. 'It was so ordinary and unexciting,' says Sophie. 'We relocated to Winchester due to Alex's work and found property in the area very expensive. The solution was to buy a smaller house and give it a serious makeover.'

The couple, who are both doctors, had previously lived in an old worker's cottage, with low ceilings and small windows, but they wanted their next home to offer a modern, multipurpose living space. 'Living in Sydney for a couple of years gave us a taste for open-plan, indoor-outdoor living,' says Alex. The house they purchased in Winchester was built in 1957 as part of a development, and most of the other properties in the road had already been extended, with one or two contemporary designs setting a precedent.

CLEVER RESEARCH Sophie and Alex had kept a magazine article about a house in a neighbouring road that had been extended and remodelled to create a contemporary living space. 'We drove past the house and recognised it from the article, so we approached the architect, Andy Ramus, for advice and he seemed

to understand exactly what we wanted,' says Alex. 'We also liked the combination of timber cladding and render which Andy's practice, AR Design Studio (ardesignstudio.co.uk), often uses.'

THINKING BIG The Nicholls asked Andy to design an open-plan family space filled with lots of sunlight, plus an additional bedroom and en suite upstairs. 'We'd done a couple of sketches of our own, but Andy's design was far more imaginative and made much better use of the space,' says Sophie.

Andy's drawings left the front of the house virtually unchanged, with just some updates to the windows, but transformed the rear of the house with a full-width, single-storey extension for an open-plan kitchen, dining and living area. A smaller first-floor extension, clad in horizontal Western red cedar planks, was added above the kitchen, to create a new main bedroom with an en suite and a separate dressing room.

'Other than making a couple of minor changes, the planners were happy with the design – especially as the front of the house was staying more or less the same,' says Sophie. The family moved out of the house and stayed with Sophie's mum in Southampton for 11 months while the building work was in progress. This saved them money, but meant they had to make



We love...
...how all the new glazing has filled the house with so much more sunlight and made the most of the views'

Matt-finish kitchen cabinets in dark grey are topped with white quartz composite worktops



Design detail LAYOUT

Both the island and dining table have been positioned to make the most of the view of the garden



a half-hour journey to visit the building site. 'We had a very tight budget and were adamant that we had to have a fixed-price contract for the work, but when builders' tenders came back, we were quite surprised by some of the high costs,' says Alex. 'In the end we chose to use a family business from Southampton, which was keen on creating modern features like shadow gaps and frameless windows, and did work of exceptionally high quality.'

Building work involved ripping out all the fittings inside the property, so the Nicholls took the opportunity to make some cash by selling their old kitchen, boiler, doors and bathroom suite on eBay.

ADDING SPACE Building work began with foundations for the large kitchen extension being excavated. A steel frame was built offsite to support three large glass panels that form a full-height glazed wall across the rear of the ground floor. The steel frame was lifted into place by a crane and cavity walls were constructed from super-insulated blockwork. The first-floor extension for the main bedroom was then constructed using a lightweight timber frame, 250mm insulation and a single-ply roof membrane, eliminating the need for unsightly structural columns beneath.

Alex took on as much DIY as possible, including clearing the site, digging some of the foundations, general carpentry and installing ceiling speakers

'The solution was to buy a smaller house and give it a serious makeover'

for a home-cinema system. 'There were no real construction surprises, although the weather was abysmal all through the start of 2012,' he says. 'I did have to take on far more project management than I'd originally intended, though, and we ended up bringing in extra tradesmen to speed things along.'

STAYING ON BUDGET Both Alex and Sophie also undertook a great deal of research to find products, such as sockets and light fittings, at the right price, which saved them hundreds of pounds. 'Having such a rigid budget helped focus our minds and we got a real kick out of cutting costs and finding bargains,' says Sophie. 'We came in on budget, and some things

were even under budget, so although the process was very labour intensive, it was definitely worthwhile.'

FAMILY LIVING Since renovating their home, Sophie

and Alex's family has grown, with the arrival of their son, Freddie, and the house's new open-plan layout is perfectly suited to family life. 'Andy Ramus gave us the confidence to be brave,' says Sophie. 'Now when people walk into the house, they're amazed that they can see straight through to the back garden. We rarely turn on the lights in the new kitchen extension, because all the glass lets in so much light, and we can enjoy panoramic views of the garden. Buying this house was a gamble and I admit I wasn't convinced at the start, but now I absolutely love living here.'

The main bathroom is decorated in a striking monochrome scheme





The central panel of glass slides sideways to open up the kitchen-diner to the terrace

RENOVATION KNOW-HOW

- **Many alterations can be made under Permitted Development**, meaning you don't need to get planning permission. For more information on planning and building regulations, visit planningportal.gov.uk and always check with your local authority before making any major changes.
- **Keep your neighbours informed** at all stages and you might need to obtain party-wall agreements, too. Check the advice given at planningportal.gov.uk.
- **For extensions and major remodelling**, it's usually advisable to employ an architect to draw up accurate plans: the Royal Institute of British Architects (architecture.com) holds a directory of approved architects.
- **Get at least three quotes for all major purchases**, including when you're hiring tradesmen and, whenever possible, negotiate fixed prices for each job rather than paying a daily rate.
- **It's not usually advisable to undertake major roofing work on a DIY basis**. Go to the National Federation of Roofing Contractors' website (nfrc.co.uk) to find a reputable roofer to do the work.
- **Remember to factor delays into the schedule** and always have a contingency pot of money to pay for those unforeseen expenses.



IN DETAIL FRONT DOORS

Create a modern entrance, as the Nichollses have done

Alex and Sophie chose a contemporary front door, crafted from solid engineered oak with a custom-made frame.

- The couple paid £1,920 for their front door from Front Door Shop (01702 421199; frontdoorshop.co.uk). 'By using a smaller company, we could get a door made to our own design for much less than it would have cost from a larger chain,' says Alex.
- If your house is listed or is in a Conservation Area,

you may need to obtain permission from your local authority before changing the external doors.

- Choose exterior doors of at least 44mm thickness. Glazing will bring more light into the hallway, but consider obscure glass if privacy is an issue.
- Quality locks and bolts are only as strong as the frame to which they are fitted, so replace a weak or rotten frame.
- If you're not planning to paint or stain the door

yourself, tell the person you hire to fit it, as this will add to the time taken to prepare, hang and finish the door.



A solid oak door ties in with the modern interior

EXTREME *Transformation 2*



The Victorian semi had been divided into flats and was structurally unsound

BEFORE

AFTER



The old rear extension is now clad in sweet-chestnut boards and large panels of glazing fill the living spaces with light

‘We turned three flats back into one home’

Ben and Jane Kilburn converted three flats in a Victorian semi into a spacious, energy-efficient family home

When Ben and Jane Kilburn first viewed their home in Dalston, East London, it was a neglected, four-storey, Victorian semi that had been split into three flats. Converting the property back into a house presented an opportunity for the couple to start from scratch and design a five-bedroom home for themselves and their three daughters, Tess, Billie and Esme.

The couple had been house hunting for nine months before discovering the property, which was just around the corner from their old home. ‘We wanted to stay in the area because the girls were

settled at local schools,’ explains Ben, a director at Kilburn Nightingale Architects (020 7812 1102; kilburnnightingale.com). ‘This property offered scope for more living space and a bigger garden.’

The Kilburns immediately realised that the house was suffering from major structural issues – there were cracks in the walls and one wall was bulging at the top. They also needed to wait for nine tenants to vacate the building before they could begin converting the flats back into one home. Work began in April 2011, with a building contractor employed to make the house structurally sound. The building was



The first floor of the existing extension has been removed to create a double-height space



A staircase links the upper-ground floor to the garden

A kitchen-diner on the lower-ground floor leads through to a double-height library



'It's a wonderful space for holding parties and entertaining, and the children enjoy bringing their friends home, too'



Trials & triumphs...

■ What was the high point of the project?

'Seeing how well the design works for us as a family has been a real pleasure after such extensive building work.'

■ Any low points?

'Discovering that a mains water pipe had burst and flooded the kitchen wasn't great.'

■ Who or what was the project saviour?

'The house: it withstood many years of neglect.'

stripped back to its shell and substantially rebuilt in places. The roof timbers were reinforced and the roof was replaced with new slates and solar panels. The Kilburns weren't able to transfer their mortgage from their previous house until the structural work had been completed and inspected by their mortgage company. Once it had been signed off, they moved into rented accommodation on the same road as their new home. 'Fortunately, our daughters loved all the excitement, which made things easier,' says Jane.

Next, architect Ben had to completely redesign the building's internal layout to convert the three flats back into a house. Walls and ceilings were removed to create large living spaces. 'We knew that the first and second floors would be used for bedrooms and the attic could be converted into a playroom,' he says. 'That left the lower-ground and upper-ground floors for our living space, which we've linked to one another by creating a double-height library area overlooking the garden.' A large panel of glazing above the patio doors on the lower-ground floor floods this double-height space with sunlight.

The brickwork in the old rear extension was in poor condition, so it was wrapped in insulation and

clad in sweet-chestnut boards. A local joiner crafted new window frames in sweet chestnut to match the cladding. Inside, all the walls and ceilings had to be replastered, and plaster mouldings and ceiling roses were reinstated in the main living areas. The staircase was also completely rebuilt from top to bottom, and a new carved-oak handrail was added. The same painted recycled floorboards were laid throughout the open-plan living spaces to create a sense of flow.

Jane and Ben have used hard-wearing, durable materials where they can, keeping finishes simple for a modern look. They sourced many of the fixtures, fittings and furnishings themselves, buying junk-shop finds and eBay purchases to help them stay within budget. They paid £800,000 for the three flats in 2010 and spent £400,000 on rebuilding and reworking the layout of the property, which took around a year to complete. The five-bedroom house is now worth around £1.8 million.

'The open-plan layout works so well for us as a family,' says Jane. 'It's a wonderful space for holding parties and entertaining, and the children enjoy bringing their friends home, too. We couldn't be happier with the way everything has turned out.'



‘We love vintage style’

Add character to a plain white kitchen with second-hand finds and industrial details, as Kirsty Brooker and Gary Coates have done

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN THE PAGE



Love their STYLE?

THE AUTOGRAPH WHITE-GLOSS
UNITS CAME FROM WREN LIVING
£. FOR SIMILAR, TRY BETTA
LIVING'S DALLAS ££ OR THE
LINEAR AT HARVEY JONES
KITCHENS £££

Personal feel
Vintage metal signs
and countertop
accessories add
character to the
white walls and
high-gloss units

BEFORE



Take the 60-SECOND TOUR

THE PROPERTY

A three-bedroom, end-of-terrace house in Beverley, East Yorkshire, built in 1995. The owners bought it in 2012.

WHO LIVES HERE

Kirsty Brooker with her partner, Gary Coates, her son, Reagan Brooker-Beaumont, 11, and their dog, Millie.

WHAT THEY DID

The couple bricked up a window for privacy and widened the opening for the back door to fit patio doors. They removed a built-in larder and replaced the units, worktops and flooring.

THE LOOK

Urban, with contemporary white-gloss units, vintage-style accessories and a cityscape mural as a feature wall.

LESSONS LEARNED

“If someone is throwing something away that you could use, don't be afraid to ask if you can take it.”

WHAT IT COST

Units.....	£2,500
Handles.....	£692
Worktops.....	£261
Sink and tap.....	£192
Flooring.....	£231
Lighting.....	£69
Appliances.....	£1,268
Wallpaper.....	£75
Paint.....	£44
Furniture.....	£518
Accessories.....	£300
TOTAL.....	£6,150

TURN OVER TO FIND OUT HOW
Kirsty and Gary created their new kitchen



THE LAYOUT There's a dining area in front of the door, with the kitchen units arranged in a U-shape on the left. The freestanding fridge-freezer is next to the double oven. Patio doors open out to the back garden

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* Infrastructure investment: the impact on consumer bills. National Audit Office Press Release, 13 November 2013.

** Easycare 40°C: Standard programme compared with SpeedPerfect option. EU Label standard cottons 60°C programme with EcoPerfect option.



Design detail UNIT DOOR

Hide clutter and save space with a tambour door – made from slats, it slides in and out of the unit casing

With plans to renovate the whole of their three-bedroom terrace in East Yorkshire from top to bottom, Kirsty Brooker and her partner Gary Coates started with the kitchen-diner, as it was where they planned to spend most of their time. ‘When I was growing up, the whole family hung around in the kitchen,’ explains Kirsty. ‘I wanted to re-create that warmth and homeliness here, but with a modern edge.’

The existing kitchen was gloomy and dated, with floor tiles that were lifting in places and dark-wood units that made the room feel claustrophobic. ‘The existing layout worked quite well, but it was let down by the colour

scheme,’ says Kirsty. ‘We knew we could easily transform the room by making it lighter and we wanted to add patio doors that we could throw open in summer to make the kitchen and garden one big sociable space.’

To achieve this, Kirsty chose white-gloss units and pale laminate flooring, then added personality with vintage furniture and a large wall mural. ‘I love the cityscape wallpaper,’ says Kirsty. ‘It’s like having a fabulous city view. My son, Reagan, and I often sit at the dining table trying to spot something new in the picture. My only niggle with the room is that we should have made the patio doors wider because it can be a struggle getting in and out with shopping bags, but, overall, we’re delighted. It’s easy to live in, easy to clean and a lovely, light room all year round.’ ➔

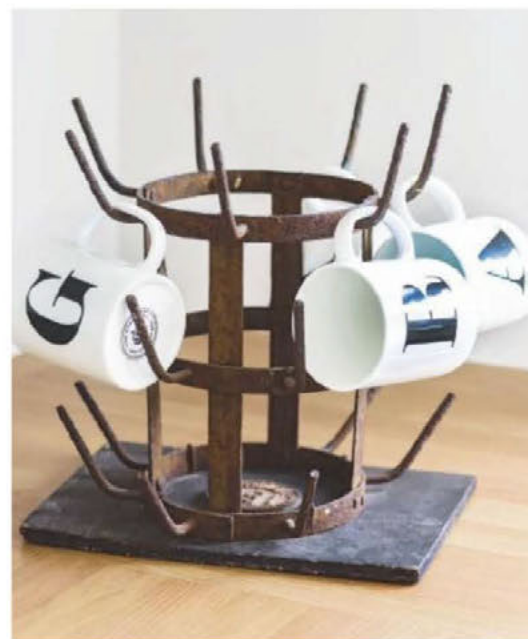
▲ Old meets new

A trio of pendants above the table light up the dining area. The table is one of Kirsty’s favourite bargains. ‘I paid £240 for it in a vintage emporium,’ she says. The swivel chairs in a mix of black and white mirror the modern style of the high-gloss slab units at the other end of the room



Admire the view

A window here was bricked up for privacy, as it looked out onto the street, and this cityscape mural added to create a striking backdrop instead



Recycle and reuse

Kirsty uses this vintage French bottle holder as a sturdy mug tree

KITCHEN SOURCEBOOK

WHERE TO BUY

Autograph white-gloss **kitchen**, £127 for a W600mm base unit, Designer range; oak **worktops**, £261; **cooker hood**, £96; gas **hob**, £194; double **oven**, £340; all Wren Living. For a similar **washing machine**, try the WMAQF641G, £299; for a similar **tumble dryer**, try the TVYL655C6G, £239; both Hotpoint range, Tesco Direct. For a similar **fridge-freezer**, try the GBF539PVQWB, £570, LG range, Ao.com. Ascona **sink**, £220, Franke range, Taps UK. For similar **flooring**, try the bleached-oak laminate, £18.99 per sq m, Wickes. Scenics **wallpaper**, £85, Komar range, Coleman Bros. Berlin Opal **Eff pendants**, £13 each, B&Q. Clementine **chairs**, £69.50 each, Atlantic Shopping. For a similar **table**, try the Vancouver, £425, Pinesolutions.co.uk. **Locker**, £10, Vintage Hoarders. For a similar **'Home' sign**, try the 'Cuisine' sign, £55, Notonthehighstreet.com. For a similar **poster**, try the 'House Rules' wall sticker, £29.99, The Present Finder. **Mug tree**, £50, Vintage Home Shop

FOR DETAILS TURN TO
OUR SHOPPING
DIRECTORY



Quirky details

A 'House Rules' poster adds humour. It's actually a wall sticker, but, as Kirsty wanted it to be portable, she mounted it on plywood and propped it against the wall



How we did it

“We ordered the units first, then ripped everything out of the kitchen except for a few cupboards, the cooker and the sink, so we could continue to use the room. The labour cost nothing as a builder friend skimmed the ceiling, bricked up a window and fitted the patio doors, then Gary's brother did the electrics and plumbing, and fitted the units, which were delivered preassembled. The preparation took about a month and the units were fitted within a week. Gary laid the flooring, built the shelves and decorated the room.”

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STYLE?

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EUROTILES & BATHROOMS
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OR FIRED EARTH'S
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‘Symmetry was at the heart of my design’

Like things organised and orderly? The Preedys' kitchen is the perfect example of balance and stylish simplicity

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN THE PAGE



BEFORE

*Considered design*

Thanks to a new kitchen extension, the Preedys had space to install a modern kitchen where a balanced layout and plenty of storage were key

Take the
60-SECOND TOUR**THE PROPERTY**

A four-bedroom, Edwardian semi in Strawberry Hill, Middlesex, which the couple bought in 2009.

WHO LIVES HERE

Emma and Ed Preedy, with their son, Jamie, seven, and their daughters, Rosie, five, and Poppy, two.

WHAT THEY DID

The couple ripped out the old kitchen and extended into the garden. They had bifold glass doors leading out to the garden, new windows and a contemporary kitchen fitted.

THE LOOK

Sleek and modern, with high-gloss, slab-style units, integrated appliances and a glass splashback.

LESSONS LEARNED

“Be careful when you are deciding on the size of an island. Mine was larger in the room than I had expected. It was okay, but I had been tempted to go larger, which would’ve certainly been too big.”



THE LAYOUT The sink is in the central island. Base and wall units, as well as the fridge and freezer, are set into the wall opposite. There’s a seating and dining area in front of bifold doors which lead out into the garden

WHAT IT COST

Units.....	£8,911
Worktops.....	£3,660
Splashback.....	£1,572
Appliances.....	£5,447
Flooring.....	£1,288
Lighting.....	£250
Paint.....	£36
TOTAL.....	£21,164

TURN OVER TO FIND OUT HOW

Emma and Ed created their new kitchen



◀ Plenty of space

The new extension has given the family room for a large kitchen, as well as a dining area and somewhere to sit and chat. Emma carefully matched the grey frames on the bifold doors and windows for continuity

Cool splashback ▶

Attention to detail and a sleek finish were important to Emma. She asked the kitchen company to find a manufacturer that could make the large splashback out of a single piece of glass, as she didn't want to see a join

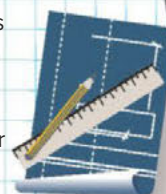
▼ Letting light in

As well as going for rooflights in the extension and bifold doors, Emma has brought in extra light with full-length windows next to the dining area, but had them fitted with frosted glass for privacy

FEATURE STEPHANIE SMITH
PHOTOGRAPHS CLIVE BOZZARD-HILL PLAN PERSONA-ID

Design detail SPLASHBACK

Customise a glass splashback by painting the wall behind it in a colour of your choice



Emma and Ed Preedy were on a bit of a tight timescale when they started looking for a house in Strawberry Hill, Middlesex, five years ago. 'We'd been living in a place in south London that had been fine for us as a couple,' says Emma, 'but then we had a toddler and another baby on the way, and we were keen to make a move.'

The couple chose the area because of the transport links, good schools and green spaces, but the lack of properties there in 2009 was a worry. 'As the pregnancy progressed, we had a buyer and were ready to go, but couldn't find anything suitable,' recalls Emma. 'Then this house came on the market. I was nine months pregnant at this point, so we couldn't have left it any longer!'

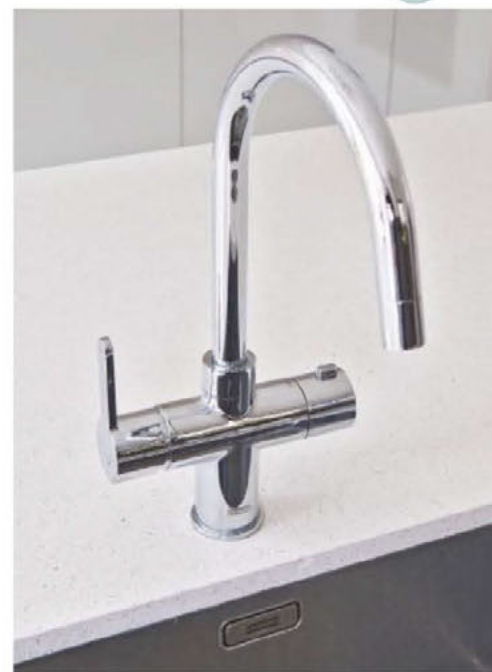
The house was rather dated, but it was structurally sound and had the potential for improvement. 'We always planned to change the kitchen at some point,'

says Emma. 'At the beginning of 2013, we had planning permission to extend in place and we were ready to go.'

The Preedys wanted easy access to the garden and more natural light. As the only windows were high up, the extension needed to have rooflights. 'We added two more long windows and bifold glass doors across the back, which can be opened up on nice days,' says Emma.

When it came to the design, the couple were keen on a sleek, symmetrical look, with the units all perfectly balanced and the extractor placed directly between the two new windows. 'All the lines of the units match and it does make a difference to the overall look,' says Emma. 'I like lots of storage and the floor-to-ceiling cupboards are capacious, so it's simple to tidy up in seconds. As I don't like seeing appliances on display, we had as many as possible integrated to have a sleek, no-fuss look. Finally, we accessorised with a glamorous chandelier and now the whole kitchen looks spacious and stunning.'





Time-saving tap

The couple's tap delivers instant boiling water, which is handy for hot drinks and cooking vegetables



How we did it

“ We used a local company recommended by neighbours for all the building work, which meant that we didn't have to deal with multiple tradesmen as the firm managed most of the project. We looked at many kitchens, but nothing inspired us until a friend suggested Azco Interiors. We saw exactly what we wanted in the showroom and from then on it was an easy process. The building work done by Lofts and Extensions in Teddington cost £40,000, which included £10,000 for the windows and doors, and the project took around three months. ”

KITCHEN SOURCEBOOK WHERE TO BUY

Hacker **units** in Shiny Cashmere and Matt Basalt Grey with M700 handle, from £126 for a 300mm base unit; 70mm Compac Snow **worktops**, £3,660; B15E52 **oven**, £648; C57W40 **oven**, £629; both Neff range; EH801MM11E **hob**, £705; LC96BB530B **extractor**, £432; all Siemens range; Kubus **sink**, £350; Minerva **tap** in Chrome, £840; both Franke range; all Azco Interiors. For similar floor **tiles**, try the Danxia in white, £27.75 per sq m, Topps Tiles. **Walls** painted in Elephant's Breath Estate Emulsion, £36 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. **Bifold doors**, £7,000; bespoke **windows** and **skylights**, £3,000; all Perfect Crystal. For a similar **radiator**, try the Reina White Single Vertical, £275, Designer Bathroom Store. For a similar **table**, try the Billy, £695, Loaf. Jasper **chairs**, £39 each, House by John Lewis range; Scultura **kettle**, £99.95; Scultura **toaster**, £99.95; both De'Longhi range; for a similar **chandelier**, try the Baroque Lustre, £240; all John Lewis

**FOR DETAILS TURN TO
OUR SHOPPING
DIRECTORY**

‘I combined two rooms’

Need space? Knock down a wall, as Barbara Waters did, for your dream bathroom

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN THE PAGE



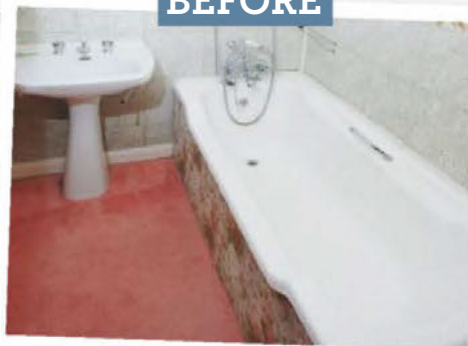
The main problem that Barbara Waters had with the bathroom in her house in Thames Ditton, Surrey, was the fact that it only had a shower attachment over the bath and not a walk-in shower. ‘The room also

got very steamy when I ran the hot water, making it prone to mildew, so I had to buy a new shower curtain every year,’ says Barbara. ‘My neighbours had knocked down the dividing wall between the separate loo and the bathroom in their home. When I saw that, it got me thinking that, if I did the same, I’d have enough room for an ample shower.’

After looking through magazines and visiting a local bathroom centre, Barbara knew exactly what she wanted but wasn’t sure it would work practically. ‘Although a walk-in shower was my priority, I didn’t want it to be at the expense of a bath,’ she says. ‘The bathroom company took a look at the two rooms and confirmed that by knocking down the dividing wall, I could create a space to meet all my requirements.’

Once the room was finished, Barbara had a bathroom party. ‘I asked the whole family over and officially opened it to all users,’ she says. ‘There were nine of us in total and my stepdaughter said, “It looks like a hotel suite”, which was precisely what I was after!’

BEFORE



Take the 60-SECOND TOUR

THE PROPERTY

A two-bedroom, Seventies, terraced house in Thames Ditton, Surrey, bought in 2003.

WHO LIVES HERE

Barbara Waters.

WHAT SHE DID

Barbara had all the fittings, fixtures and tiles ripped out of the separate loo and bathroom, then the dividing stud wall was knocked down. The room’s walls and ceiling were replastered, then the new bathroom fixtures and

fittings were installed and the walls and floor were retiled.

THE LOOK

Fresh and modern, with a white scheme warmed up by grey floor tiles, rattan baskets and ochre-coloured blinds.

LESSONS LEARNED

“Choosing just one company to carry out the entire project means you are more likely to have continuity, accountability and higher standards of workmanship.”



THE LAYOUT The heated towel rail and shower are to the left of the door, while the basin and vanity unit are facing the doorway. The bath and loo sit below the windows and there’s shelving to the right of the door

New layout

Knocking down a wall gave Barbara enough space for a new suite and her longed-for walk-in shower



Love her
STYLE?

BARBARA'S MEDIUM TEXTURED
TILES ARE FROM SURFACE
TILES £££. FOR SIMILAR, TRY
THE BUMPY WHITE WALL
TILE FROM TOPPS TILES £
OR TILEFLAIR'S
CRUSADER WHITE
££

WHAT IT COST

Shower.....	£1,438
Bath and taps.....	£746
Basin and tap.....	£343
Loo.....	£735
Tiles.....	£1,650
Heated towel rail.....	£312
Extractor fan.....	£90
Vanity and mirror.....	£462
Door.....	£100
Blinds.....	£159
Chrome accessories.....	£114
TOTAL.....	£6,149

TURN OVER TO FIND OUT HOW
Barbara created her new bathroom



Dream shower
'I wanted a good-sized, easy-to-clean shower with lots of elbowroom,' explains Barbara



Practical choice

The vanity unit has cupboards and a drawer, providing space for loo rolls, cleaning materials and toiletries

Design detail MIRROR

The mirror above the basin is fitted with a demister heat pad, so it won't fog up when the room is steamy



Wooden accents

The shelves and door bring a warm, natural element to the room. 'To save money, I used wood from an old desk for the shelves,' says Barbara



How I did it

“I hired a local company to do all the work, which included ripping everything out of the loo and bathroom before knocking down the wall between them, then replastering and retiling. The firm, TJ Bathrooms, then installed the new sanitaryware. Even though I gained a bigger space, compromises still had to be made. There wasn't enough space for a large bath as well as the walk-in shower that I wanted, so I had to go for a smaller model. The work took about eight weeks and cost around £10,000.”

BATHROOM SOURCEBOOK WHERE TO BUY

Sunrise wall-hung **loo**, £258, Vitra range; soft-close **seat**, £133; **flush unit**, £344; Status **bath**, £395; **bath panel**, £185; both Carron range; Tec single-lever **bath tap**, £166; Tec basin **mixer tap**, £169; both Hudson Reed range; Faro 58 **vanity unit**, £303, Eastbrook range; **basin**, £174; Flipper 600 walk-in **shower glass panel**, £469; Flipper 800 **end panel**, £248; **shower head** and **thermo valve** with **handset**, £570, Aqualisa range; Chrome straight heated **towel rail**, £312; bespoke polished-edge **mirror**, £159; Claygate **shower tray**, £151; chrome **shower rack**, £77; chrome **grab bar**, £37; all TJ Bathrooms. Interiors medium textured **wall tiles** in white, from £55.62 per sq m; Architech **floor tiles** in Fossil, from £85.16 per sq m; all Surface Tiles. Roller **blinds** in Fiji Bamboo, from £86 (61cm x 76cm), Hillarys. Geneva oak veneer **door**, £99.99, Wickes. For similar wicker **baskets**, try the willow lined, £35 for two, John Lewis. Polka **towels**, from £15 for a hand towel, Jigsaw

FOR DETAILS TURN TO
OUR SHOPPING
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February 2015	£639	£699	£1099
March 2015	£719	£799	£999
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Krakow

Krakow is fast becoming a popular city break due to its richly varied history and culture. The Old Town showcases many picturesque architectural sights and historic attractions, and during the evening, the town square becomes a pretty display of soft lights and alleyways home to numerous bars, shops and cafes. Whilst in Krakow you can explore the Wawel Royal Castle, St Mary's cathedral, the Barbican, the Jewish quarter and Oskar Schindler's factory

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Departing	Prices from
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March 2015	£159
April 2015	£209



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Prague

Visit Prague, the capital and largest city of the Czech Republic and located alongside the Vltava River. Prague is home to a number of famous cultural attractions including Prague Castle, the Charles Bridge, Old Town Square, the Jewish Quarter, the Lennon Wall and Petřín hill. Since 1992, the extensive historic centre of Prague has been included in the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites.

Price includes:

- Return flights from London, regional departures may be available at a supplement
- Flight tax & fuel supplements
- Three-nights centrally located accommodation
- Bed and Breakfast

Departing	Prices from
January 2015	£169
February 2015	£159
March 2015	£159
April 2015	£199



3 nights from
£159pp

Rome

Marvel at the Colosseum, throw a coin into the Trevi fountain or visit the Vatican where you can wander through St Peter's Basilica and admire Michelangelo's stunning frescoes in the Sistine Chapel. Rome is simply one of the most beautifully rich cities in the world to visit to enjoy a three night stay at a centrally located hotel.

Price includes:

- Return flights from London, regional departures may be available at a supplement
- Flight tax & fuel supplements
- Three-nights centrally located accommodation
- Bed and Breakfast

Departing	Prices from
January 2015	£159
February 2015	£159
March 2015	£159
April 2015	£189

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or visit our website:

www.readertravelbreaks.com/iho

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Mon - Fri 9am-9pm / Sat 9am-5pm
/ Sunday 10am-6pm

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'The roll-top bath is the star'

Make a favourite item the focal point of your room, as Debbie Chadwick has done

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN THE PAGE

When Debbie Chadwick bought her cottage in Brighton, East Sussex, redesigning the bathroom was her priority. However, instead of rushing into it, she took her time, turning to magazines and the internet for inspiration while saving money for the project.

Debbie wanted a Zen-like bathroom where she could really relax and she also wanted to create a look that she could eventually update without a huge amount of expense, but first she had to tackle the layout. 'The window is the first thing you see when you walk into the room and to make the most of it, a new layout was essential,' says Debbie. 'I thought moving the loo and installing the bath underneath the window would give a bit of a wow factor and create more visual space. Thankfully my builder assured me that doing these things was possible.'

Once the layout was decided, Debbie turned her attention to the look of the room. 'I decided MDF panelling would be a good choice, as I'll be able to change the colour scheme with paint instead of having to retile the whole room,' she explains. 'Good light was important too. The space is lovely and bright in the daytime thanks to the window and a skylight, and it's a soothing place to be in the evening, with the lighting dimmed to create a tranquil atmosphere.'

BEFORE



Take the 60-SECOND TOUR

THE PROPERTY

A two-bedroom, Victorian, former railway worker's cottage in Brighton, East Sussex, bought in July 2011.

WHO LIVES HERE

Debbie Chadwick.

WHAT SHE DID

Debbie relocated the loo to the opposite side of the room and made space for a walk-in shower by relocating the boiler. She had the floor reinforced for the cast-iron bath, which was fitted beneath

the window, the walls were replastered then panelled, the shower was tiled and a ceramic floor was added.

THE LOOK

Vintage with a modern twist. The roll-top bath has been teamed with a modern basin, a wall-mounted loo and a freestanding shower.

LESSONS LEARNED

“Moving a loo isn't always a problem. My builder rerouted pipes so I could have it where I wanted it.”

THE LAYOUT The basin and the loo are on the left, while the bath is opposite the door under the window. The shower is behind the door on the left



Love her STYLE?

DEBBIE'S MILLBROOK CAST-IRON BATH IS FROM THE CAST IRON BATH COMPANY £. FOR SIMILAR, TRY ASTON MATTHEWS' ASTONIAN LUXOR ££ OR THE DEVON FROM HERITAGE BATHROOMS £££

Bathing beauty

Debbie planned the room's layout around a traditional roll-top bath, but added contemporary elements, such as the basin, loo and grey paintwork

WHAT IT COST

Bath and taps.....	£981
Sink and taps.....	£792
Loo.....	£179
Shower.....	£962
Mirror.....	£200
Wall tiles.....	£100
Floor tiles.....	£475
TOTAL.....	£3,689

TURN OVER TO FIND OUT HOW
Debbie created her new bathroom

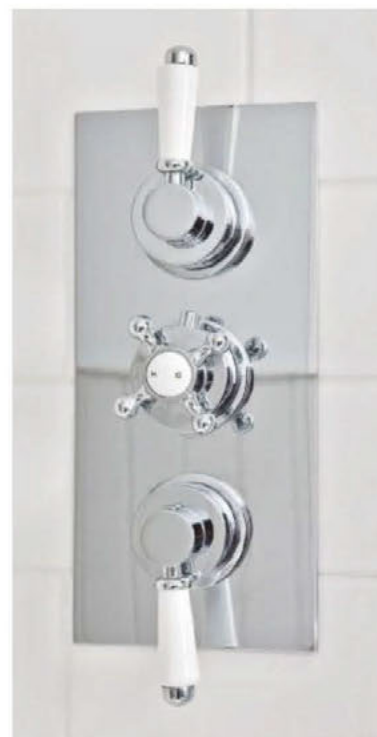


Design detail PANELLING

It's perfect for a traditional look, ideal for uneven walls and you can repaint it when you like



Subtle design
Bespoke glass doors and a large shallow tray make the walk-in shower look unobtrusive, sleek and spacious



Cohesive look

'Although the taps on the shower, basin and bath were bought from different places, the styles match,' says Debbie



Traditional fitting

A bath-shower mixer tap makes it easier for Debbie to clean the bath, as well as wash her hair



How I did it

“I came up with some layout ideas for my builder, who told me he could move the loo if I wanted. It wasn't possible to run the soil pipe under the floor due to the joists, so he rerouted it along the outside of the building to avoid ugly pipework. He also ripped out the old suite, the tiles and the boiler – a new one was fitted in the kitchen. The builder then tiled the room, installed the basin, loo, shower and bath, and panelled and painted the walls. The work took just over three weeks and cost £4,750.”

BATHROOM SOURCEBOOK WHERE TO BUY

Millbrook cast-iron **bath**, from £675, The Cast Iron Bath Company. **Shower panels**, £575, Brighton And Hove Glass Company. Ultraslim Eco **shower tray** (1200 x 800), £79.99; traditional thermostatic triple-valve **shower set**, £307; all Victoria Plumb. Beaumont bath shower **mixer**, £156, Cannadines Bathrooms. Saneux Jones **washbasin**, £435, UK Bathroom Store. Marflow basin mixer **taps**, £357, St James range, Modern Homes Bathrooms. Euro Mono wall-hung **pan**, £179, Bathstore. White Gloss **wall tiles**, £19.95 per sq m; for similar **floor tiles**, try the Carrara marble-effect, £43.75 per sq m; all Walls and Floors. MDF **panelling**, £23.61 per sq m, Wickes; painted in Cornforth White Estate Eggshell, £51 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. For a similar **mirror**, try the Windlesham, £235, The Chandelier & Mirror Company

**FOR DETAILS TURN TO
OUR SHOPPING
DIRECTORY**

Ideal Home Travel

Japan - land of the rising sun

Departures from April to October 2015

Japan - an ancient culture of emperors, fierce shoguns, samurais and brutal martial arts. Yet it's also a place of gentle geishas, colourful kimonos, exquisite garden design and Zen Buddhism. How did a country so deeply rooted in such diverse heritage become one of the most modern and advanced economies on the planet? Pondering such questions is what makes a trip to Japan so incredibly rewarding. Having travelled there once, you'll feel almost hypnotically drawn back to this truly enigmatic country.

Price includes

- Return flights from London Heathrow
- Stay in hand-picked four-star hotels, with daily breakfast and three meals
- See the famous sights of Tokyo - the Meiji shrine, Omotesando Street, fashion-setting Harajuku and the Akihabara electronic town
- Visit the Nikko National Park, with its Shogun-era architecture and a UNESCO World Heritage site
- Take a scenic boat trip from Tokyo's traditional Asakusa to the luxury shops of Ginza
- Enjoy views of Mt. Fuji from Lake Kawaguchi and the hot-spring mountain spa resort of Hakone
- See the volcanic Owakudani 'Boiling Valley' by aerial gondola
- Travel at 189 mph on the incomparable bullet trains
- Visit to Hiroshima's Peace Park and museum
- Experience the 300-foot Kegon Falls and Lake Chuzenji
- Tour Kyoto, former Imperial capital and essence of traditional Japan with wooden houses, geishas, temples and Zen gardens
- Guided tour of Nara, Japan's first capital with its huge bronze Buddha
- Opportunity to stay the night in a 'Ryokan', a traditional Japanese Inn
- Opportunity to learn origami, traditional flower arranging or Japanese cooking
- Escorted by our experienced tour manager

13 days
from only
£2799pp



11 days from
only £2359pp



Victoria Falls, Botswana Safari & Cape Town

Departures from
February to November 2015

Price includes

- Return flights from London Heathrow
- Excellent quality, hand-picked three and four-star hotels, with breakfast and five dinners
- Experience the stunning Victoria Falls, with an optional helicopter flight
- Watch the fire-red sunset over the mighty Zambezi River during a sundowner cruise on the 'African Queen'
- Explore Botswana's vast Chobe National Park, one of the world's most outstanding game reserves
- Stay four nights in cosmopolitan Cape Town
- Full-day tour to the Cape of Good Hope, see where two oceans meet experiencing unique flora and fauna, including Africa's only penguin colony
- Tour the Western Cape's Wineland's with its manicured scenery of endless vines, plus a visit and tasting at a 300-year old winery
- Escorted by our experienced tour manager

17 days from
only £2399pp



Grand tour of China

Departures from
June to November 2015

Price includes

- Return scheduled flights from London Heathrow
- Staying in hand-picked four-star hotels
- Enjoy a five-star Yangtze River Cruise through the breathtaking Three Gorges, including full-board
- Visit the Forbidden City, the seat of Imperial power for 500 years
- Visit to the Temple of Heaven and the imperial gardens at the Summer Palace in Beijing
- Tour old Beijing's historic quarters by cycle rickshaw
- Visit the astonishing Great Wall of China
- See the world-famous Terracotta Warriors
- Visit to the Chengdu Panda Research Centre
- Enjoy the bright lights and shopping of Shanghai
- See the man-made Longshen Rice Terraces
- Cruise the world-famous Li River surrounded by thousands of limestone peaks
- Daily breakfast and thirteen meals included plus a Peking Duck banquet
- Escorted by our experienced tour manager

16 days from
only £1899pp



Vietnam & Cambodia

Departures from
January to November 2015

Price includes

- Return flights from London Gatwick
- Four and five-star hotel accommodation with breakfast, plus five meals
- Stay and tour Phnom Penh, 'Pearl of Asia'
- Visit the ancient city and temples of Cambodia's Angkor, one of the world's greatest ancient sites
- Tour of Vietnam's capital Hanoi by cycle rickshaw, including the Temple of Literature, colonial belle-époque villas and Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum
- Take a cruise aboard a converted Chinese junk in Halong Bay's beautiful limestone archipelago
- Visit the awe-inspiring Citadel and Forbidden City in Hue, Vietnam's former imperial capital
- Stay in the heart of exciting Saigon visiting the Cu-Chi tunnels, a poignant reminder of the US-Vietnam conflict
- Enjoy a full day cruising the Mekong River delta, the world's 10th largest river system
- Escorted by an experienced tour manager

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Meet Amy, our expert blogger: she'll keep you one step ahead in the ever-changing world of tech

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Check out my edit of this month's hottest new trends and products

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TREND ALERT! INSTAGRAM GIFTS

Make the most of your fabulous filtered photos

WHERE WE HAVE SEEN IT...

Beaches. Breakfasts. Brand-new shoes. There's nothing we won't Instagram. Since its 2010 launch, 200 million users have shared 60 billion pics and, now, roughly 60 million Insta-pics are shared daily.

WHY WE LOVE IT... We put so much care into choosing the right filter and tweaking that tilt shift that we rightly want to show them off – and not just through an online feed.

PRODUCTS WE LOVE... Besides Instagram prints you can order through the likes of polargram.com and instaprnt.co.uk, there are stickers and magnets from Sticky9, while the Projecteo lets you share your best images BIG on the nearest wall.

GIRL ABOUT TECH'S MANIFESTO

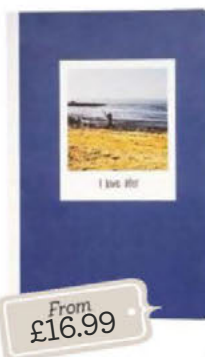
We believe that tech should...

- Make your life easier
- Be super-simple to use
- Stand the test of time
- Look good and work brilliantly



BLOW IT UP

This tiny projector comes with a coupon for a free slide wheel of nine of your favourite Instagram shots to beam onto your walls
Projecteo, The Fowndry



DULY NOTED

Choose an Instagram pic for each page, then use to jot down your musings. I love its exercise-book feel and retro, rounded corners
Photo journal with personalised cover, PhotoBox



MAGNET MOMENTS

Pimp your fridge with this set of nine magnets – available in two sizes – made from your Insta-pics
Magnets, Sticky9

Objects of desire



Panasonic oven and hob

This stunning cooking combo will bring you several steps closer to culinary perfection

FEATURES WE LOVE

1 The induction hob's

Genius Sensor notices if you've turned your food or added ingredients to the pan, and increases the power until the contents reach the set temperature again.

2 **A timer that counts down from a set time** and turns off the zone when it reaches zero means you'll never worry that you've left the hob on.

3 **Its smart safety features** protect the clumsiest cook. They include a child lock, an auto shut-off that kicks in if a

pan boils over, a lock that disables the control panel for 20 seconds for cleaning and a 'pause' button that brings everything to a low simmer when you have to answer the door or deal with the kids.

4 **Slide-out telescopic rails** inside the oven support all three of its shelves, so you won't burn yourself in a juggling act with a hot dish.

5 **The oven's pop-out dials**, which command the temperature and function, are ideal if you find touch controls temperamental.

HL-CK644
built-in oven and
KY-B64CG
induction hob,
Panasonic

WHAT GEEK GIRLS KNOW



Social media is bringing like-minded people together in amazing ways – I can type #knitsocks into Instagram and discover the patterns that, say, Norwegians are using. Previously, I'd have had to get on a plane to Norway and find a knitting club to do that!

DR SUE BLACK, COMPUTER SCIENTIST AND FOUNDER OF #TECHMUMS

Because it's beautiful

Are you ready for your close up? With its flip-down screen for selfies, this beautiful camera certainly is. For ultra-professional results, you can set it up to face you, then use the companion app to take a still or shoot video with a tap of your smartphone.

It also has a lightweight body, art filters and a Live Guide to preview the effects of changing different settings like aperture.

PEN E-PL7 compact-system camera, Olympus



£499

DID YOU KNOW?

59% of UK shoppers use smartphones to check prices online before purchasing items in a store



3 million British women store beauty items, such as nail polish and face masks, in their fridge

Sources: Samsung and Vouchercloud

The hi-tech way to... play

Keep everyone in the family entertained on rainy days



£85

Carry on gaming

PlayStation TV, Sony

This sends PlayStation games to a TV elsewhere in the house, as well as streaming PSP and PS Vita games



£80

Rocket robot

Sphero Ollie, Firebox

Controlled by an app for Android, iPhone and iPad, this robust robot can perform tricks at up to 14mph



From
£35

Crack the code

Gamer kit, Technology Will Save Us

Build a console from scratch, then learn to write the code to play games like Snake and Tetris on it



£60

Figures of fun

Skylanders Trap Team

starter pack for Wii, Argos

Place the collectable figurines on the 'portal' supplied and watch them come alive within this game

Ideal Home Travel

8 days bed & breakfast
from £1,049pp



Baltic Capitals

Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius

Departures from Jun to Sep 2015

The capital cities of the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia are packed full of wonderful sights, friendly people and an intriguing heritage. On this tour you will stay in the city centres allowing you to delve deeper into their fascinating history and culture.

Price includes

- Return flights from London Gatwick to Tallinn via Riga, returning from Vilnius via Riga
- Seven nights' bed and breakfast accommodation at four-star hotels
- Walking tour of each capital and free time to explore independently
- Visits to Pärnu, Estonia's 'summer capital' and the 18th century Rundāle Palace
- Tour manager throughout



3 days bed & breakfast
from £329pp



The Mary Rose

Private viewing

Departures from Apr to Oct 2015

The Mary Rose lay on the seabed of the Solent from when she sank in 1545 until her rediscovery in 1971. Her salvage in 1982 uncovered a Tudor time capsule. Don't miss this incredible opportunity to discover her fascinating story with a private evening viewing at the Mary Rose Museum.



Price includes

- Two nights' bed and breakfast at the four-star Marriott Portsmouth
- Welcome reception, two dinners at the hotel and two lectures
- Private drinks reception at the Mary Rose Museum hosted by Christopher Dobbs from the Mary Rose Trust
- Visits to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, Southsea Castle and Fort Nelson
- Tour manager throughout

7 days bed & breakfast
from £599pp



Provence

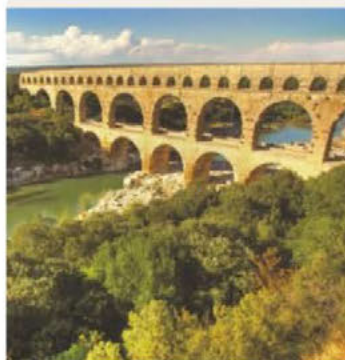
Timeless Beauty

Departures from Apr to Nov 2015

Provence offers the ultimate romantic portrait of France. Brimming with beautiful scenery, wonderful historic sights, elegant cities, delicious food and regional wines, it is an irresistible region to explore. Visits include the Pont du Gard, Aix-en-Provence, Arles, and the Camargue.

Price includes

- Return Eurostar and TGV from St Pancras or Ebbsfleet to Avignon via Lille
- Six nights' bed and breakfast at the three-star Hotel Bristol in the centre of Avignon
- Free day to relax or explore independently
- Transfers and full coach touring itinerary
- Tour manager throughout



11 days bed & breakfast
from £1,849pp



Cuba

Havana, Cienfuegos, Viñales Valley

Departures from Jan to Mar 2015

Verdant jungle, lovely beaches and the fading colonial grandeur of cities are only part of the story of a nation shaped by revolution – Cuba has retained an air of mystery that makes every day full of fascinating discoveries.



Price includes

- Return flights with Virgin Atlantic from London Gatwick to Havana
- 10 nights' bed and breakfast accommodation in Havana, Cienfuegos and Viñales Valley
- Five dinners including a farewell meal
- Full touring itinerary including Havana, Cienfuegos, Trinidad, Santa Clara and the Viñales Valley
- Tour manager throughout

To book call 020 7251 0045 quote SELJANIDE

For further details visit www.traveleditions.co.uk/ide



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You'll love this...

...handy healthy drinks maker

If, like me, you need a little help in switching from the December diet of mince pies and fizz to something more virtuous, then behold the Nutribullet. The love child of a juicer and a blender, and smaller than both, it has a super-powerful motor that pulverises fruit and veggies – including tough stems, skin and seeds – resulting in the most nutritious drink possible. It's incredibly easy to use, and you can glug your blended juice or smoothie straight from the cup it's mixed in.

GIRL ABOUT TECH, TECHNOLOGY EDITOR AND BLOGGER

Can't resist buying smoothies? These new-generation drinks makers could save you a fortune...



Nutribullet, £99.99 for a 12-piece set, High Street TV

OR TRY ONE OF THESE GRAB-AND-GO MACHINES

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



△ *More than drinks*

Fruit Sensation BL142A42, Tefal

GIRL ABOUT TECH SAYS 'This mini blender has three attachments to blend, chop and grind. Each one comes with a lid, so you can pop them in the fridge'



△ *Smooth operator*

Smoothie 2GO SB056, Kenwood

GIRL ABOUT TECH SAYS 'Two speeds plus a pulse give this the same precise control as a full-size blender, then swap the blades for a drink-through lid for a portable treat'



△ *Gym buddy*

Mix and Go, Russell Hobbs

GIRL ABOUT TECH SAYS 'Kick-start your health regime with this fuss-free compact blender. Simply whip up a smoothie in one of the two bottles included, and you're set'



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You'll love this...

Easy-to-personalise smartwatch



Apple watch, from \$349 (UK price yet to be confirmed)

We saw it coming, but now the smartwatch revolution has finally begun. Beam me up, Scotty!

Until recently, only Captain Kirk could communicate via his watch, but that's all changing. The Apple Watch – available in early 2015 – connects wirelessly to your iPhone, so you can use it to take calls, get directions, scroll through your Facebook feed and measure your activity using its pedometer and heart-rate monitor. Plenty of strap and face options mean you can really make it your own.

GIRL ABOUT TECH, TECHNOLOGY EDITOR AND BLOGGER



OR TRY ONE OF THESE SLEEK SMARTWATCHES

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



£329

◁ 3G ready

Gear S, Samsung

GIRL ABOUT TECH SAYS 'Holds its own 3G SIM, so you can use it away from your smartphone, but this and the large 2in screen make it a chunky beast. Still, it's got over 1,000 apps, including Nike+'

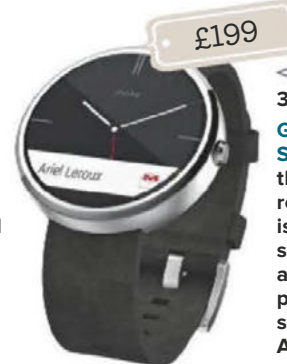


£200

◁ Personal assistant

ZenWatch WI500Q, Asus

GIRL ABOUT TECH SAYS 'Enable the Presentation Control feature to use this watch as a remote control and time manager when giving a business presentation'



£199

◁ Life proof

360, Motorola

GIRL ABOUT TECH SAYS 'I'm drawn to this model's elegant round face, which is protected by super-tough glass, and its not-too-silly price tag. It runs a simple version of Android and can be worn in the shower'

Girl About Tech explains...

Top-notch hi-res audio

For years, the quality of the music we listen to has been going down, but with high-resolution audio, you'll hear what you've been missing

WHAT IS IT? Do you remember upgrading your TV to an HD set? Well, think of high-resolution audio as the musical equivalent, with sound as close as possible to what the artist recorded in the studio. There's no set-in-stone definition of high-resolution audio as yet, but it's often talked about as 'better than CD quality'. The very best music is essentially a copy of the studio master.

WHY DO I NEED IT? Formats like MP3 make it much easier to buy, listen to and store our favourite tunes, but they compromise the quality of the music. That's because to make digital files small enough to fit onto your music player or to be streamed quickly over the internet, the music has to be heavily

compressed. When audio files are condensed into a format like MP3, a lot of the information that was captured in the original studio recording can get lost. That doesn't mean a particular cymbal or backing vocal suddenly goes missing – it's subtler than that – but the general consensus among audio geeks is that heavily compressed files don't sound as natural to the human ear.

New technologies and faster broadband speeds, however, are paving the way for larger 'lossless' music files – in formats like FLAC and Apple's ALAC, rather than MP3 – that don't lose the audio detail of the original analogue recording. This means they can sound incredibly realistic, as though you're listening to a live performance.

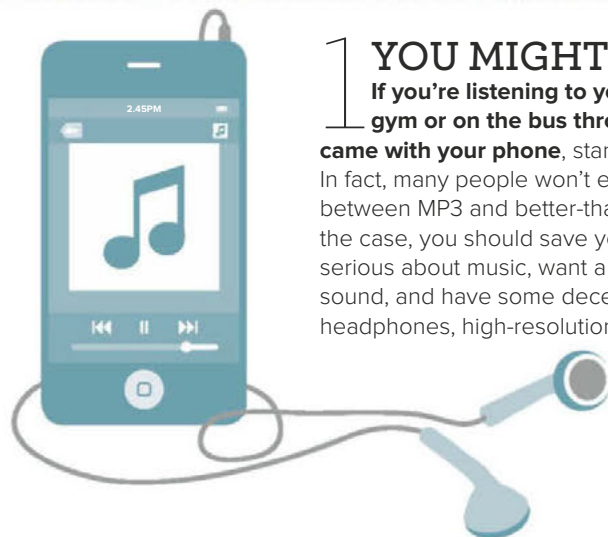


“16-bit files are CD quality, whereas

24-bit, studio-master files capture music as the artist intended it to be heard. Try describing something in 16 words, then again in 24 words. More bits 'spell' a more accurate description”

GILAD TIEFENBRUN,
MANAGING DIRECTOR, LINN PRODUCTS

6 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT HIGH-RESOLUTION AUDIO



1 YOU MIGHT NOT NEED IT

If you're listening to your favourite playlist at the gym or on the bus through the headphones that came with your phone, standard MP3s are just fine. In fact, many people won't ever be able to differentiate between MP3 and better-than-CD quality – and if that's the case, you should save your money. But, if you're serious about music, want a really dynamic, less 'flat' sound, and have some decent hi-fi equipment and headphones, high-resolution audio is worth a listen.

2 IT'S ALL ABOUT THE BITS

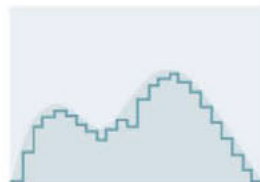
If you're streaming music via Spotify or downloading it from iTunes, the files will have a much lower bit rate than that of a CD or the original studio recording. The bit rate is the number of bits encoded in the file every second and can be the difference between music that sounds OK and OMG. The average bit rate of an MP3 is between 96 and 320Kbps (kilobytes per second), while a CD will have 1,411Kbps, and studio quality is much higher still.



Imagine this sound wave is a second of live music



16-bit CD quality might capture this much detail...



...but 24-bit studio quality will capture even more

3 YOU CAN BUY MUSIC ONLINE

High-resolution audio hasn't reached iTunes or Spotify yet, but you can download master-quality albums from other sites, such as Linn Records or HDtracks. Alternatively, you could stream 'True CD-quality' music from Qobuz for £19.99 a month.

5 YOU MIGHT NEED A DAC

Your music player will use a DAC (digital-to-analogue converter) to decode a digital file into music your ears can understand. High-resolution audio speakers and players will have a top-quality DAC on board, and some smartphones, including the LG G3 and Sony Xperia Z3, do a decent job. However, if you're plugging your headphones into an average smartphone or laptop, you'll need to connect a headphone amp to your device via USB, then plug in your 'phones to hear the difference.

AT-PHA100 portable headphone amp, Audio-Technica



£349

4 YOU'LL NEED THE RIGHT KIT

The first thing on your list will be a computer or music player loaded with high-resolution tracks. As the files can be pretty hefty size-wise, you might want to store them on a separate hard drive. Whatever device you're using to manage your music, it should have software or an app that recognises different high-resolution files – Android phones and PCs running Windows Media player should be fine, but iTunes can't handle FLAC files yet, so you may need to download another program. Alternatively, look for Apple-friendly ALAC files. Finally, invest in a speaker or music system that's happy dealing with high-resolution audio files (see right).



6 WI-FI BEATS BLUETOOTH

The problem with Bluetooth is that it's not very good at handling large music files. So, while it's happy with MP3s, it struggles to send anything bigger from your phone to your Bluetooth speaker or headphones. AptX is a new type of Bluetooth that's better at transmitting larger audio files, albeit currently of CD quality rather than a studio master. For the best quality when streaming music wirelessly, use Apple Airplay or Wi-Fi.

Try these... ...SPEAKERS AND MUSIC PLAYERS



£400

Best for: An upgrade

Minx Xi digital music system, Cambridge Audio

Hook it up to a decent set of speakers or headphones and a laptop full of high-resolution music files, and it will do all the hard work, making every track sound crisp with its built-in DAC and amplifier



£229

Best for: Multiroom music

Music Flow H5 Wi-Fi speaker, LG

This speaker's dynamic DAC can handle 24-bit music files a treat and you can link the H5 to other Music Flow speakers for hi-res listening in every room



£895

Best for: Nonstop tunes

Mu-so wireless speaker, Naim range, John Lewis

Streams better-than-CD-quality music from smartphones and tablets connected to your Wi-Fi network. Spotify Connect is built in, so you can stream music and use other apps at the same time



Best for: Taking on the move

NWZ-A15 Walkman music player, Sony

Enjoy top-quality music out and about. It has 16GB of storage, but you can add more songs with a memory card

£169

Meet the brand DUALIT

Nearly 70 years in the making, this family firm remains true to its inventive roots



Dual-Max juicer, £99.99, Dualit



“When I met Alex Gort-Barten, the grandson of Dualit’s founder Max, I got a taste for the attention to detail behind the brand’s success. He showed me Max’s early designs before explaining how he and his dad Leslie make prototypes with the help of a 3D printer. And, apparently, while many Dualit products are now made in China, its Classic toasters are hand-built in the UK – and painted by a chap called Brian!”

GIRL ABOUT TECH,
TECHNOLOGY EDITOR AND BLOGGER

2 MORE HERO DESIGNS

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



Captain crunch

Heritage NewGen four-slice toaster in Hicks Blue, Dualit

GIRL ABOUT TECH SAYS

‘Hand made from more than 140 replaceable parts, this toaster is fully repairable and the sandwich cage, £15.35, delivers the tastiest toasts’



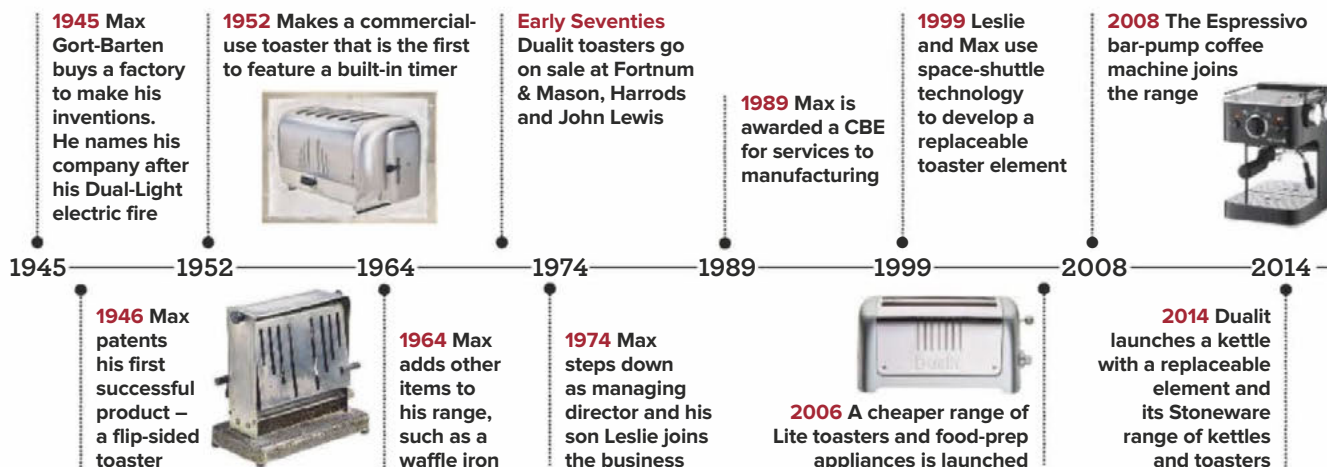
Handy helper

700W hand blender, Dualit

GIRL ABOUT TECH SAYS

‘You’ll really appreciate the different design details, from the anti-suction blending stick to the drain holes in the dishwasher-safe jug and chopping bowl’

A BRIEF HISTORY OF DUALIT





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See the video on:

www.youtube.com/SuncorpGlobal



Bluetooth
Connectivity



USB for
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reddot award 2014
winner



* Make party drinks special, page 134

* Create your own family tree, page 136

* Get ready for cold weather, page 138

* Store emergency numbers, page 138

* Deep clean your bin, page 140

JANUARY

Mix up an easy cocktail

Hip mixologists are shaking things up with exciting recipes and unusual ingredients that you can use at home

1 ADD SOME SALT Traditionally used to rim glasses of margarita, salt is now breaking out as a cocktail ingredient in its own right. Salt can temper bitterness, balance acid and make flavours pop – it's a bit like when you add salt to food.

Why not try? The Salty Bird.

Ingredients 1½ shot rum, ¾ shot Campari bitter, 1½ shot fresh pineapple juice, ½ shot fresh lime juice, ¼ shot sugar syrup and a pinch of salt.

How to make Shake all the ingredients with ice, then strain into an ice-filled long glass.

2 FORAGE FOR INGREDIENTS

The concept of 'forage-to-glass' is fast catching on as mixologists turn to nature-inspired recipes. The countryside and greener parts of urban areas are all ripe for picking. Look out for blackberries, sloe berries, crab apples, dandelions and herbs, and use for infusions, syrups and garnishes. Avoid anything that might have been sprayed with weedkiller and if you're unable to identify something, don't eat it.

Why not try? Sloe Motion.

Ingredients Glass of sparkling wine or Champagne, ¾ shot sloe gin, twist of lemon zest or slice of lemon.

How to make sloe gin Half fill a sterilised, sealable bottle with frozen sloe berries, top up with gin, seal the bottle and shake. Leave

to infuse for two months, shaking every few days. Strain through a fine sieve and add caster sugar to taste. Bottle and leave for at least a month.

3 TRY JAMS AND PRESERVES

Instead of using sugar syrup, add a dollop of jam to give a cocktail a sweet, fruity flavour. It's also a great way to use up the last of your summer preserves.

Why not try? Marmalade Cocktail

Ingredients: 4tsp orange marmalade, 2 shots gin, ½ shot fresh lemon juice, twist of orange zest.

How to make Stir the marmalade into the gin until most of it has dissolved. Add the lemon juice, shake with ice and strain into a chilled glass. Garnish with a twist of orange zest.

Download this...

COCKTAIL FLOW (iOS, Android and Windows Phone, free)

Browse hundreds of cocktails including ones for special events, including Christmas. It also has a cost-estimate calculator to help with party budgets and you can select drinks already in your cabinet for cocktail suggestions.

How to... MAKE YOUR OWN SOUR MIX

Add a zesty tang to cocktails with this home-made citrus creation



1 Combine 1 cup water and 1 cup sugar in a small saucepan and simmer until the sugar has completely dissolved.



2 Turn down the heat to its lowest setting. Pour 1 cup strained lemon juice and 1 cup strained lime juice into the sugar syrup.



3 Remove from the heat and leave the mixture to cool before straining and funnelling it into an airtight glass bottle.



4 Stick a home-made label onto the bottle and pop a pourer in. Try the stainless-steel free-flow pourer, £1.99, Drinkstuff.com.



We Love

Greenwich drinks cabinet, £749, Marks & Spencer



3 OF THE BEST BAR ACCESSORIES



ADD SPARKLE
Simply Silver mini
sparklers in a box,
£4.80 for 20,
Talking Tables



SHAKE IT
Recipe French
cocktail
shaker, £15,
John Lewis



STIR THINGS UP
Stainless-steel
cocktail stirrers,
£7.99 for four,
Lakeland

♥
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* Have a bottle of sugar syrup handy for cocktails. Put 250ml water and 250g caster sugar in a pan and bring to the boil, stirring, until the sugar has dissolved. Cool it, bottle it and refrigerate for up to a week

Try something new... Research your family tree

Track down your ancestors to discover where you come from

Q HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Sitting around chatting with family at Christmas offers a valuable opportunity to find out more about who and where you come from. Family secrets and stories are often shared as people relax and the wine flows, with the older generation often very happy to have a willing audience for their tales. Have a notebook or a voice-recording app on your phone, such as Dictaphone – Audio Voice (iPhone, iPad, free), ready to record the details so you can go back and listen to them later. Contact other relatives to see if they know of any descendants, then start recording the information online using genealogy software, such as Legacy 8.0, Family Historian 5 or Reunion 10.

Q WHAT DO I PUT ON MY TREE?

Fill in your online family tree template with as many relatives' details as you can, starting with your name and date and place of birth at the bottom and any siblings either side. If you're married, your spouse's name goes alongside you, linked with an 'm' or '='. Put any children beneath, with a 'b' and their date and place of birth. From your name, branch up to your parents' and their information, and above them your grandparents' names and birth dates.

Q HOW DO I GET CERTIFICATES?

To find and verify information, you will need birth, marriage and death certificates,

and the census. Certificates cost £9.25 each from the General Register Office for England and Wales (gro.gov.uk) – the GRO has records from 1836 onwards, which are held online. Digitised indexes can also be searched by name on ancestry.co.uk, findmypast.co.uk, freebmd.org.uk, genesreunited.co.uk or ukcensusonline.com. With censuses, households had to complete forms on a specific night every decade dating from 1801 (except 1941), providing a snapshot of the household. The information from these forms was then copied into books and arranged by district. These have since been digitised, making it easier to search for people as you can look by name, age, place of birth and residence.

Q WHERE ELSE CAN I FIND RELEVANT INFORMATION?

For searches before the Victorian era, parish registers are your best bet. Some are online, while others are stored locally on microfiche. Contact a church in the parish you are interested in. Wills are also a good source of information. Try The National Archives (nationalarchives.gov.uk) or the National

Probate Calendar on Ancestry (ancestry.co.uk). Obituaries in newspapers (britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk), military records (ancestry.co.uk) and the National Archives' Historic Hospital Admission Records Project are also good places to try.

Q HOW FAR BACK WILL THE TREE GO?

It'll depend on the records – some were destroyed in the war, plus the further back you go the fewer of them there are. However, most people in the UK should be able to trace their families back to the beginning of public records in 1837.



TRACE YOUR TREE

Dusty archives are in the past – go online to grow your branches

USEFUL WEBSITES

- Ancestry.co.uk (census returns)
- Britishorigins.com (genealogy records)
- Findmypast.co.uk (access to the Civil Registration Index for England & Wales, census records, directories)
- FreeBMD.org.uk (index of births, marriages and deaths)
- Scotlandspeople.gov.uk (official Scottish genealogy resource)

HANDY APPS

- Who Do You Think You Are? Forum (iPhone, iPad, Android, £4.99). An online genealogy community
- MyHeritage (iPhone, iPad, Android, free). Create your tree and upload pics
- Find A Grave (iPhone, iPad, free). Search for graves worldwide
- Historypin (iPhone, Windows, Android, free). Search for images uploaded by museums and archives

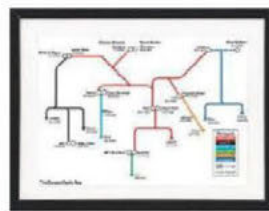
Our favourite... FAMILY TREE ARTWORK



Family photos tree wall sticker, £79.99, SirFace Graphics



Family tree photograph print, £28, WikWak range, Notonthehighstreet.com



Personalised family tree print, £60, This Is My Map



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5 ways to survive a cold spell

☒ **PROTECT PIPES** If you're going away, stop pipework freezing by having the heating on continuously at a minimum of 10°C or set it to come on twice a day. Also, ask a neighbour to check on your property while you are away.

☒ **PREP FOR POWER CUTS** Think about what you might need in a power cut, such as extra batteries, torches and candles. Also, keep electrical items, such as mobile and cordless phones, tablets, laptops and electric toothbrushes, well charged all the time just in case.

☒ **STAY COSY** Check where draughts are coming in and, if necessary, get draught excluders. Also, have blankets, thick socks and gloves in one easily accessible place, ready to use if a power cut occurs and you have no heating.

☒ **STAY MOBILE IN SNOW** Cat litter or sand sprinkled around car tyres will help to get you out of an icy jam. If this doesn't work, place car mats in front of the tyres to provide traction, then gently accelerate. Keep de-icer close to hand for thawing frozen locks.

☒ **BE A WINTER FRIEND** Reach out to vulnerable, elderly neighbours by checking in on them. Ask if their home is warm enough, offer to make them a cup of tea or help with their shopping, or give them a lift if they need it.

GET WEATHER-READY

Create handy kits for your house and the car, and make sure everyone knows where to find them

KIT FOR YOUR HOME Gather these essentials together now so you can grab them in an emergency, such as a power cut or boiler breakdown.

■ Non-perishable foods, such as tins, cereal and energy bars ■ Torch with new and spare batteries ■ Candles ■ Matches ■ Three-day supply of bottled water ■ Essential medication ■ First-aid kit ■ Spare keys to the house and car ■ Cash ■ Hot-water bottles ■ Blankets and warm layers ■ Duct tape ■ Heavy-duty plastic sheeting ■ Extra baby and pet supplies (if needed)

KIT FOR THE CAR In wintry conditions, you should try to travel with as full a tank of petrol as possible and a fully charged mobile phone. Here are a few extras to pack, too.

■ Breakdown membership card/number ■ In-car mobile-phone charger ■ Ice scraper and de-icer ■ Antifreeze ■ Torch with new batteries and spares



Total Blackout tealight jar, £8.50, Garden Trading

■ Hand warmers ■ Bottles of water ■ Emergency space blanket ■ Snacks – chocolate and cereal bars ■ Reflective warning triangle ■ Grit or cat litter to melt snow ■ Rain poncho ■ High-visibility vest ■ First-aid kit ■ Cash NB Adapt the lists to suit your location, the weather and size of your household.

CALL ON THE RIGHT PEOPLE

Fill in the gaps, cut out and keep by the phone just in case

PROBLEM	CALL	NUMBER/WEBSITE
Power cut	Your local Distribution Network Operator	Call 0800 404090 or go to 2.nationalgrid.com/UK/Safety/Power-cut/
Frozen or burst pipes or boiler problems	A local plumber	Search ratedpeople.com for a reputable recommendation or call your regular plumber NAME NUMBER
Need to make a claim on your home insurance	Your home-insurance company	NAME NUMBER
Feeling unwell but not an emergency	NHS 111	Call 111 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, for fast medical help for urgent but non-life-threatening situations
Worried about floods in the local area	Floodline	Call 0345 988 1188 or go to gov.uk/check-if-youre-at-risk-of-flooding
Can smell gas	National Gas Emergency Service	Call 0800 111999 or go to nationalgrid.com/uk/Gas/Safety/Gas+Emergency/

♥
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* *Prevent car doors from freezing*
by spraying the rubber gasket
with an oil-based cooking spray
or try only shutting the door to
the first click, so it's not flush
to the body, then locking it.
Your car is still secure but this
should prevent doors freezing up

3 OF THE BEST SOS BUYS



**BACK-SEAT
BLANKET**
Safari check cotton
blanket, £30,
Cath Kidston



**EMERGENCY
SERVICE**
Enamelled first-aid
box in Chalk, £30,
Cox & Cox



**NO BATTERIES
NEEDED**
Wind-up lantern
in grey, £10,
National Trust



Tackle a task... Blitz the kitchen bin

After the holiday season, your much-used bin will need a thorough clean. Banish lingering smells and traces of unknown food, and bring it back to its former glory

ESSENTIAL KIT

Keep these tools at the ready and try to tackle your bin once a month

- Rubber gloves
- A hose or a garden watering can
- Multipurpose antibacterial cleaner
- Nylon bristle brush
- An old towel or paper towels

1 PICK OUT PARTICLES

Don your rubber gloves, as this is one of those tasks that can get a bit icky. Remove the bin's lid and set it aside. Empty the bin of any food debris festering at the bottom.

2 HOSE IT DOWN

Take your bin outside and, using a hose pipe, spray it inside and out with water. If you don't have any outside space, then do it in the bath and use a shower head or watering can. Pat the bin dry with an old towel or paper towels.

3 BANISH BACTERIA

Spray a multipurpose, antibacterial cleaner liberally all over the bin. Pay special attention to the rim and bottom, where bacteria tends to gather, and don't forget the underside of the bin as well.

4 GET SCRUBBING

Using a long-handled, nylon-bristle brush (or a brand-new loo brush) give the bin a good scrub, then let the cleaner sit for five minutes. Meanwhile, tackle the lid.

5 RINSE AND DRY

Wash the cleaner from your bin and its lid thoroughly using the hose or watering can. Wipe down the inside and outside of the bin using either a towel or paper towels. Alternatively, you can leave it to air-dry.



TOP TRICKS TO blitz the bin

1

Empty, clean and disinfect your bin regularly to avoid a build-up of bacteria

2

Opt for a pedal bin, so hands don't often need to come into contact with the lid

3

Sprinkle bicarbonate of soda in the bottom of the bin to absorb odour and moisture

4

Buy the best bin bags you can afford – good-quality ones are less likely to split and leak

3 of the best WAYS TO TAME YOUR TRASH

Get waste-wise with these reliable buys



Get it organised
Simplify your waste disposal and recycling by investing in a bin with compartments
Totem 50, Joseph Joseph



Banish the smell
Use instead of chemicals as an ecofriendly odour neutraliser
Bicarbonate of soda, Dri Pak range, Amazon.co.uk



Keep it contained
Choose thick bags with strong ties – they won't split and food won't fall out
Tie-top dustbin liners, Lakeland

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Recycled **kraft paper**, £3 for a 5m roll, Paperchase. For similar **string**, try the red and white baker's twine, £3.90, Pipii. Owl and Tree **stamp set**; Noel Bell **stamp set**; both £13 each, Yellow Owl Workshop range, Fred Aldous

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We love...

Dala Horse **stamp set**,
£13, Yellow Owl Workshop
range, Fred Aldous

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hit the spot...



sofa.com

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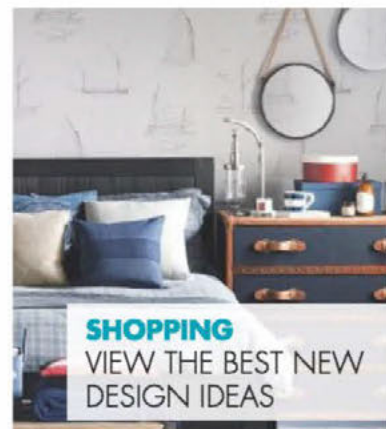
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Simple solution

UPCYCLE STORAGE TINS

This is a great idea for revamping old empty storage tins and a clever way to present home-made food gifts. Choose an enamel spray paint in a pretty colour. In a well-ventilated space, spray the outside of your tins and lids. Allow to dry thoroughly before decorating: we used snowflakes punched from white card, twine and hand-stamped labels, all glued into place

Fast-dry gloss enamel **spray paint** in Sky Blue, £3.48, Plasti-kote range, B&Q.
Tins, from a selection, Ikea. Snowflake **punch**, £9.47, Rico range, Fred Aldous

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We love...
 Red hanging star,
 £4.99, The Original
 Pop Up Shop



Simple solution

FILL STAR TABLE FAVOURS

Pretty paper stars filled with sweets make perfect place-setting name markers. Fold a piece of kraft paper in half and draw a star in pencil. Using a chalk pen or white marker, draw spots or stripes within the star shape. Cut it out, then sew around the shape 5mm inside the edge, leaving a 4cm-wide gap. Push treats inside the star, then sew the gap closed

Recycled **kraft paper**, £3 for a 5m roll; white extra-fine **paint marker**, Uni range, £2.65; both Paperchase. Hand-thrown Eve **dinner plate**, £19; hand-thrown Eve **side plate**, £12; both Sparrow and Co. For a similar linen **napkin**, try H&M

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We love...

Vintage silver **cutlery**, £19.95 for a fork, knife and spoon, Nkuku



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TBRA14IA001F

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Singer 3223 Simple Sewing Machine, £150 SING14IA0021

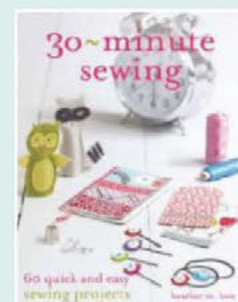


Singer 3221 Simple Sewing Machine, £139 (RRP £189)
SING14RZ002Y



Singer 7465 Confidence Sewing Machine, £200 (RRP £230) SING14HT0004

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The salty bacon and sweet maple syrup in this Canadian-inspired dish is a winning taste combination

Blitz that HANGOVER

The morning after the night before,
treat everyone to a spirit-reviving feast



Maple-cured bacon & cheese pancake stack

SERVES 6 TAKES 40MIN PLUS CHILLING TIME COSTS £1.15 PER SERVING

■ 25g butter, slightly melted and then cooled but not chilled ■ 225g plain flour ■ 2½tsp baking powder ■ 1tsp caster sugar ■ 250ml milk ■ 2 eggs ■ Sunflower oil, for brushing ■ 2 rashers of maple-cured bacon ■ 6tbsp grated Monterey Jack or Cheddar cheese ■ Maple syrup, to drizzle

1 Use a balloon whisk to mix the butter, flour, baking powder, caster sugar, milk, eggs and 1tsp salt. When well combined, cover and chill in the fridge for 30min.

2 Brush a nonstick frying pan with oil, then when the pan is hot, add a couple of dollops of pancake batter. When bubbles appear on the surface, turn the pancakes

over and cook until golden. Remove the pancakes from the pan and put greaseproof paper between them, then cover with foil. Repeat until all the mixture has been used.

3 Meanwhile, grill the bacon until crispy. Stack the pancakes and bacon on plates with cheese sprinkled in between. Drizzle maple syrup on top and serve immediately.



New-style eggs Florentine

SERVES 4 TAKES 30MIN COSTS £1.71 PER SERVING

FOR THE HOLLANDAISE

■ 2 egg yolks ■ 2tsp lemon juice ■ 2tsp white wine vinegar ■ 120g butter, melted and cooled

FOR THE EGGS ■ 500g mixed mushrooms, sliced ■ 30g butter ■ 2tbsp rapeseed oil ■ 2 garlic cloves, crushed ■ 4 eggs ■ 400g fresh spinach ■ 4 English muffins ■ Grating of fresh nutmeg ■ Small bunch of chives, finely snipped

1 To make the hollandaise, whizz the yolks in a processor for 1min. Heat the lemon juice and vinegar in a pan until steam comes off the surface. Pour onto the whizzing

blades in a slow stream, then pour in the butter until the sauce is thick.

2 Fry the mushrooms in the butter and oil for 4min, then add the garlic and fry for a further 2min. Cover the mushrooms with foil and set aside.

3 Meanwhile, poach the eggs in a pan of simmering water for 3min. Put the eggs in a bowl of iced water, retaining the pan of hot water. Wilt the spinach, then drain.

4 Toast the muffins. Put the eggs back into the hot water to reheat. Top each muffin with some spinach, mushrooms, an egg and a little sprinkling of nutmeg. Pour on the hollandaise and garnish with chives.

Cook's tip

Make the hollandaise an hour ahead and keep it in a Thermos or a bowl sitting in a pan of warm water

Serve with extra hollandaise sauce on the side and a hair-of-the-dog Buck's Fizz



Salt beef open sandwich

SERVES 6 **TAKES** 15MIN
COSTS £2.33 PER SERVING

■ 1kg salt beef, as a joint or ready sliced
■ 4tbsp Dijon mustard ■ 4tbsp crème fraîche ■ 1 sourdough loaf, thickly sliced
■ 285g mixed cornichons, sliced in half, and pearl onions

- 1 If you've bought a joint of beef, carve it across the grain into even slices.
- 2 Mix the mustard and crème fraîche. Spread each slice of the sourdough with the mustard mix, then top with the salt beef and a few cornichons and onions.
- 3 Serve the sandwiches with extra sauce, cornichons and onions on the side.

Cook's tip Visit goodtoknow.co.uk to learn how to make salt beef from scratch

A New-York-style treat that would also make a cracking supper



Sometimes you just need something sweet



Danish pastries

MAKES 9 **TAKES** 40MIN PLUS COOLING TIME **COSTS** 28P PER PASTRY

■ 75g butter ■ 50g light brown sugar ■ 100g raisins ■ 2tsp ground cinnamon ■ 1 pack of uncooked croissant dough ■ 1tbsp plain flour ■ 3tbsp icing sugar

- 1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/375°F/Gas 5 and line a baking tray with greaseproof paper.
- 2 Heat the butter, sugar and raisins in a pan until the butter is melted, then stir in the cinnamon. Cool for 10min.

- 3 Unroll the croissant dough onto a lightly floured surface and pinch together the perforated sections of dough.
- 4 Spread with the butter mixture, then roll up from the short end to create a sausage. Slice into nine discs and transfer to the baking tray. Bake for 15min, or until golden and puffed up.
- 5 Leave the pastries to cool on a wire rack. Mix the icing sugar with a few drops of water, then drizzle over the pastries.



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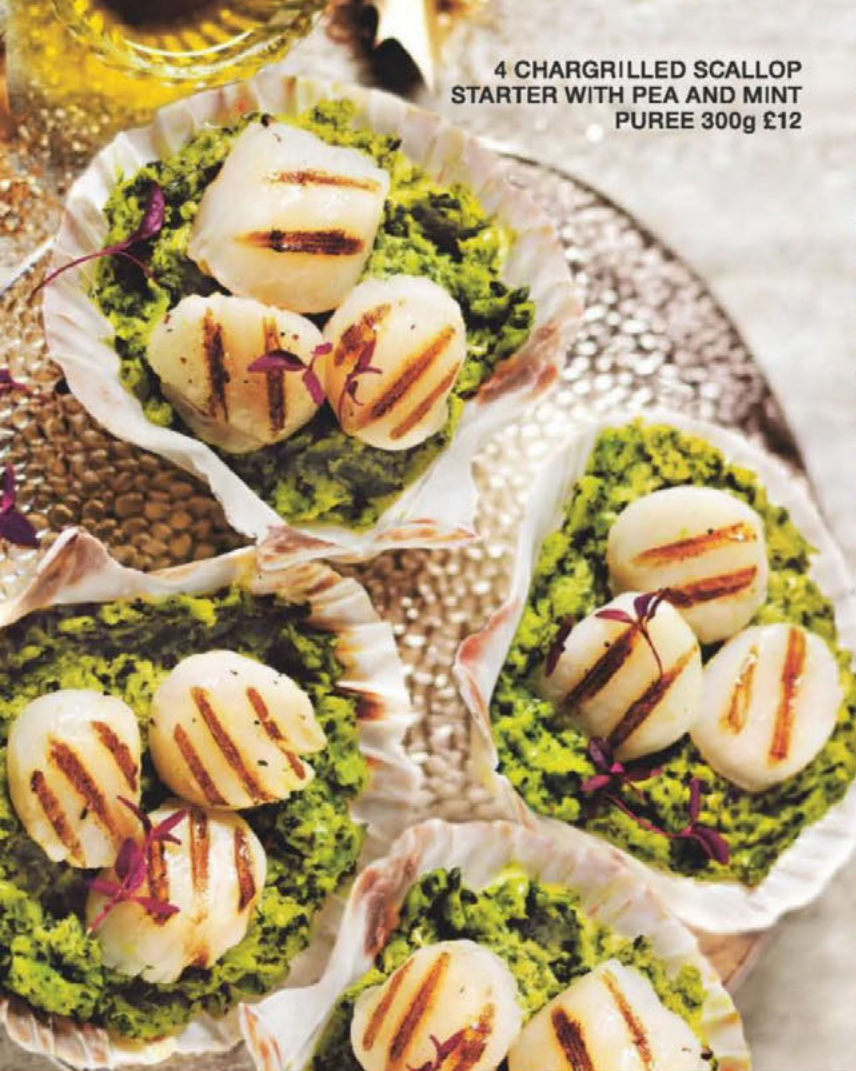


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In the KITCHEN

This month, add zing to a dish with chimichurri and indulge in a Christmas show-stopper dessert, then find your inner health freak with a steamer

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

To-do list for **JANUARY**

EAT ready-made dishes from The Saucy Fish Co. We like the ready-to-cook fish and sauce pairings, from £4.50 for two portions, and the Saucy-centre fishcakes, £3.25 for two, from major supermarkets.

DRINK Sipsmith sloe gin 2013, £24.25 at Sainsbury's, which celebrates that year's bumper sloe harvest.

TREAT yourself to last-minute Christmas shopping at the Chocolate Festival from 12-14 December 2014 at London's Business Design Centre, £7 for an adult ticket in advance. Visit festivalchocolate.co.uk.

CLEMENTINES
Serve leftover clementines with delicious marzipan cake. Find similar recipes at goodtoknow.co.uk



Add zing to
a roast chicken
dish by serving it
with chimichurri

Try a new taste...

CHIMICHURRI

Developed in Argentina to accompany meat, chimichurri is a sharp, herby sauce made from finely chopped parsley, oregano and garlic mixed with olive oil and wine vinegar. There are many variations of the sauce – chilli flakes, coriander and bay leaves are often included. You can buy it in specialist shops, ready made or as a dry mix to which you add oil and vinegar, but it's easy to make, too.

HOW TO USE Mix 2tbsp soy sauce, the juice of 3 limes and 1 crushed garlic clove in a dish. Slash the skin of 8 chicken drumsticks then leave in the marinade for 30min. Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas 6. Take the drumsticks out of the marinade, put them on a baking tray and rub in 2tbsp olive oil. Cook for 45min, brushing with the marinade occasionally, until cooked through. To make chimichurri, mix 1tsp dried chilli flakes, 1 peeled, finely chopped shallot, 1 deseeded, finely chopped green chilli, 2tbsp olive oil, 2tbsp red wine vinegar, 2tbsp each chopped fresh parsley and coriander. Spoon it over the chicken and serve with sweet potato wedges.

3 of the best CENTREPIECE CHRISTMAS DESSERTS

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Lemon log

Sponge, white chocolate limoncello mousse and candied zest combined
Limoncello Bûche (850g), Taste the Difference range, Sainsbury's

Berry nice
An indulgent yet light pavlova topped with white-chocolate curls
Berry pavlova stack (403g), Morrisons



£3

£15



French fancy

Pile up 60 cream-filled profiteroles, drizzle over chocolate and caramel sauces, and finish with popping candy and glitter
Croquembouche patisserie kit, Finest range, Tesco

LOOK WHAT WE FOUND!

Here's a multitasking gem: Measure liquids in the flask, then lift out the central tube and use the 2-in-1 silicone brush to baste a joint, or whip off the brush and use it as a pipette

Kitchen Lab measure and brush, Pyrex range, The Range

£12.99



IDEAL GREAT DEAL

Steam your supper with these pan sets

Posh pots

Suitable for all hobs, this set has stay-cool handles and water-level markings

Classic II steamer set, John Lewis



£80



£22

Hot stuff

A worthy addition to a kitchen, this stainless-steel trio can be used on all hobs
Induction-hob-ready three-tier steamer, Asda Direct

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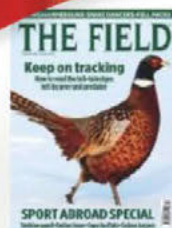
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AYJ4

In the GARDEN

Make the most of your outdoor space this month with our expert tips and essential know-how

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Last-minute CHRISTMAS

Head out into the garden or nearby woods to gather greenery for quick arrangements



Create a festive floral centrepiece for your table

Vase, £26.50; baubles, from a selection; all Sarah Raven

Weekend project



WITH SARAH RAVEN

Don't panic, there's still time to make a stunning Christmas centrepiece.

Fill a large vase with antique-style glass

baubles. Pre-soak an oasis ring and place it on its plastic base. Start to build your arrangement, using a dense layer of festive foliage, such as variegated holly, with longer sprigs of rosemary at intervals. Insert fresh, lime-green lady's mantle all around and add detail with pink and white hellebores and scarlet anemones. Put the arrangement on a small plate and put it on top of the vase, placing a red pillar candle in the centre.

Sarah Raven is a gardener, writer and TV presenter



Kale is so hardy, you can harvest it all winter long

To-do list for JANUARY

PICK nutritious kale from now until May. Its leaves are delicious steamed or boiled and served with a hearty, warming stew. Alternatively, chop it, drizzle it with oil, sprinkle on salt and sugar, then oven bake it for five minutes for delicious, crispy 'seaweed'.

PLANT shrubs on mild days when the ground isn't frozen hard. To enjoy a host of beautiful pink flowers and a lovely heady scent in spring, choose *Viburnum bodnantense* 'Dawn'.

SOW your geranium seeds now in a warm propagator and you can look forward to masses of colourful plants to fill your pots and baskets come April and May. Flowering will occur approximately 12 to 16 weeks after sowing.

Look forward to geraniums in spring



Hyacinths bring rich fragrance and colour to a garden

Grow something beautiful...

HYACINTHS

A perennial favourite with intensely fragranced blooms, hyacinths flower in March but there are specially prepared bulbs that bloom at Christmas. Grow indoors, then plant in beds and borders to enjoy a spring show for years to come.

HOW TO GROW Bulbs are planted in early autumn, but container-grown ones can be planted right up until summer. Aim for 10cm of soil over the top of the bulb and 15cm between each plant. Hyacinths like a sunny spot with freely draining soil, so if they're in containers, mix coarse sand into the compost.

VARIETIES TO TRY

BEST FOR

Hyacinth 'Delft Blue'



A classic variety with exquisite blue flowers, this plant grows to around 25cm tall. It can also bloom for up to eight weeks.

Forcing in pots, to be enjoyed at close range. As befits the name, it looks lovely teamed with blue and white china.

Hyacinth 'Pink Pearl'



This hyacinth has such an abundance of delightful cerise and pink blooms, they actually overlap one another.

Planting en masse in the garden. This compact variety can endure all types of spring weather and still look great.

Hyacinth 'Woodstock'



Sporting velvety purple-red flowers atop near-black stems, this stately variety can grow up to 30cm tall.

Using as a cut flower. Change the water often and add a drop of bleach to the vase, and these blooms will last for a fortnight.

LOOK WHAT WE FOUND!

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS The competition closes at midnight on 10 January 2015. The entry instructions form part of the rules. Proof of posting will not be accepted as proof of delivery. All claimants must be in possession of the original Ideal Home January front cover bearing a winning number. In the event of printing or technical errors, omissions or duplications, Time Inc. (UK) reserves the right to withhold a particular prize or to declare the Game void. Time Inc. (UK) retains the right, at its discretion, not to award prizes to claimants or consortiums who have won a lucky numbers Game in the past 12 months, or to claimants who, in the opinion of Time Inc. (UK), have not entered into the spirit of the Game. Prizes must be accepted as offered. No entrant can win more than one prize. The Game is open to all readers aged 18 or over and resident in the UK, and the Channel Islands, other than employees (and their families) of Time Inc. (UK), the reproduction house, printer and distributor of Ideal Home magazine, wholesale and retail newsagents SP: Spoke and any participating sponsors and their agents. The Editor's decision is final and no other correspondence will be entered into. All winners will be confirmed in writing and must agree to publicity. For customer service, call 0333 202 3390.

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If you've telephoned, texted or written to us to check if you have a winning number and have been informed that you have a successful match, please send a photocopy of your front cover (by recorded delivery), plus your name, address, daytime telephone number and which prize you are claiming to: Yasmin Christofi, Ideal Home Lucky Numbers January 2015, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 OSU, to arrive no later than 23 January 2015. Please keep the original cover safe, as we will need it to verify your claim at a later date. This address is for prize claimants only. For a list of winning numbers, see 'By Post' (right).

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Lines open at 12.01am on 26 November 2014 and close at midnight on 10 January 2015.

BY PHONE *BT calls cost £1.53 per minute and should last no longer than two minutes. Cost from other networks may be higher. Have your lucky number ready when you call.

BY TEXT **Texts cost £1.50 per message received plus standard network charges. You will receive two text messages. When you enter by text, you may in future receive SMS marketing messages from Time Inc. (UK) and Ideal Home magazine. If you don't want to, please end your text with NO INFO.

BY POST To see if you have won, write your seven-digit lucky number with contact details on a postcard and send it to: Ideal Home Lucky Numbers/January, PO Box 5639, London W1A 2HN, to arrive no later than 3 January 2015. You will be notified by letter if you are a lucky winner.



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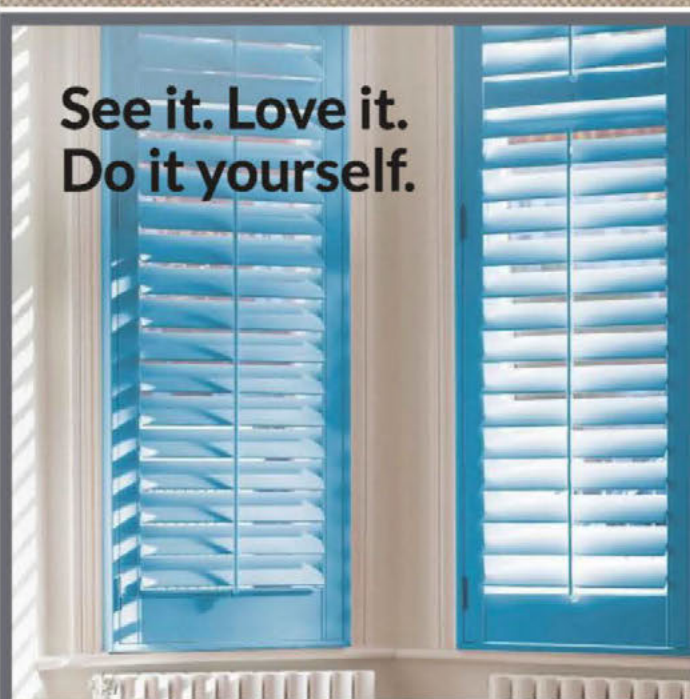
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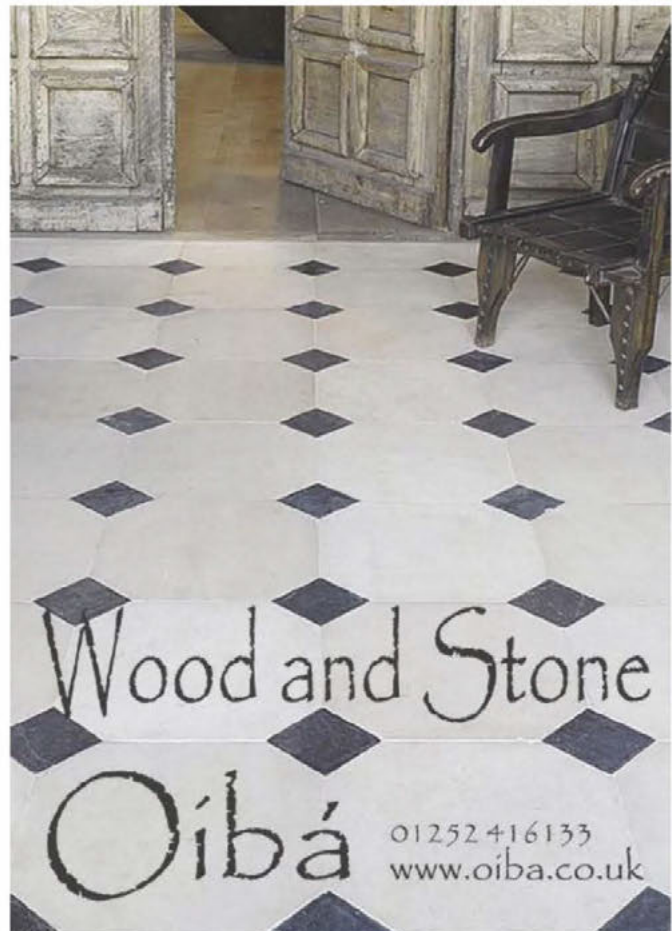
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Simple Pleasures

LIFT YOUR LIFE ONE
TREAT AT A TIME...

MAKING SOUP Vanessa Richmond, Associate Editor

There's a brief window every year when making soup becomes an essential part of my life. As soon as Christmas is over and I've arrived home from the parental or sisterly abode, I literally do not know what to do with myself

After the noise and chaos that envelops the Family Richmond during the festive season, my house feels very quiet and still. I am a sad, lost figure standing in the hallway wearing a gravy-stained Christmas pudding jumper and clutching a carrier bag of lovingly Tupperwared leftovers.

I know that if I don't act decisively now, inertia will overtake me and I'll spend the rest of the holiday lying on the sofa in the winceyette penguin/polar bear/snowflake pyjamas Ma Richmond got me for Christmas (which I still love, even though I'm in my forties now and should probably be wafting about in a slinky wrap like the women in Galaxy and cat-food adverts do) watching MGM musicals back-to-back and working my way through half-price tins of Quality Street from the corner shop.

Of course, such activities are known benefits of being a solo dweller, but, coupled with the post-Christmas slump, I've found that path leads nowhere but domestic sluttiness, returning to work in the grip of an IBS episode and, ultimately, self-loathing. I have time on my hands. I have my own body weight in leftovers. I have a lot of slightly rubbery vegetables I'd bulk-bought in the hope of a healthy yule (but ignored in favour of gift-boxed biscuits, Lidl stollen and M&S stilton). The conditions are perfect for some soup therapy.

Now, as a rule, I don't cook. I heat and I assemble, but I don't cook. It's not that I can't. I'm not bad at it when I do (thanks to Delia and some foodie housemates I had in my renting twenties), and I enjoy it, too. But on a day-to-day level, I just don't have the time or the energy. Even at the weekend, I'd rather spend an unassigned hour pottering about, reading in the bath or binge-watching *Homes Under the Hammer* than peeling vegetables. However, one thing I will slave over a hot stove for is soup.

I've developed a kind of emotional dependence on the stuff from being a

perpetual dieter: I'm one of those people who's always on a diet, but never actually loses any weight. (Don't be fooled by the photo at the top of this page, dear reader. It was taken during a period of post-break-up thinness, so imagine that face, but with fat-suit prosthetics.) I have gained – and lost – WeightWatchers Gold Status twice. I am a *Femail* article case study waiting to happen.

But, when you're in the habit of studying the labels on the back of food packaging, you learn a lot. From pots of supermarket soup, you learn that it is surprisingly low-calorie for something so filling and yummy (unless it's made with cream, obvs). Also, you learn that you're paying handsomely for what is essentially some vegetables and stock.

While I'm no MasterChef, I'm pretty confident that even I can bubble up some veg in a pot and make it taste half decent. You don't even need a recipe book – I started by noting down the ingredients listed on the back of my supermarket favourites and replicating them.

Everybody knows it's the ultimate fix when you're sick or want to eat 'cleanly' after a period of toxic living. Simple, natural and nourishing, it sends a message to your body after the roller coaster of Christmas that the worst is over. But it's about nurturing your soul, too. The act of making soup is an act of taking back control when you've lost the balance in your life.

So, the grubby jumper gets chucked in the machine, the leftovers get unpacked and my monster-feet slippers go on... and soon I'm padding around the kitchen, probing the



Banish the post-Christmas blues with a bowl of home-made soup

darkest recesses of cupboards and unearthing dusty packets of grains and pulses I tend to impulse-buy in Holland & Barrett penny sales with the best intentions (how do you say quinoa, anyway?!), and things in jars that have passed their 'best before' dates. There ain't nothing you can't make soup out of, y'know.

While I'm slowly chopping vegetables, I get thinking: about family stuff; friend stuff; work stuff; random stuff – like holidays and 'wouldn't-it-be-nice?' stuff. Plans for the year ahead start to form. While the soup is simmering, I notice that the Christmas tree is droopy and sad with no gifts underneath it. So I take down the decorations and pack them away. Without them, the house looks strangely stripped back to its bare bones and I can suddenly see a new way to arrange the furniture or a wall that's crying out for some fabulous wallpaper. More ideas are buzzing now, so when the soup is ready, it becomes a working supper while I jot them down. By the time the bowl is empty, I've got a bucket list of beautiful possibilities to look forward to. Hmm. With that done, maybe I'll fire up my iPad and see if M&S has any slinky wraps in the sale...

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